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ABSTRACT

The 298 books annotated in this issue are arranged under six headings: nursery schools, infant schools, junior schools, secondary schools, adult literacy work, and apparatus, games, and kits. The books for school-age children are further subdivided into reading and language development, fiction, and nonfiction. Each entry contains a subjective readability rating from a panel of teachers, a readability rating based on the Fry Readability Graph, an estimate of the interest age range, and if the book is a nonfiction text, the Dewey and Bliss classification numbers. Books that apply to more than one age classification are cross-referenced, and two indexes (subject and author/title) are included. (RL)

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BOOKS IN SCHOOL

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Volume 1, Number 2—November 1977

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Editorial

Firstly I must apologise for the late appearance of this issue both to our readers and the publishers who have kindly supplied us with books for review. The delay is largely a measure of the success of the venture for as you will see almost six times as many publications are reviewed in this issue as were dealt with in the first one. As a result we are hastily enlarging our team of reviewers for it would appear that we can expect to continue to receive books in this sort of volume in the future. Hopefully the next issue should be available on time.

Some small changes have been made as a result of our experience with the production of the first issue. The Flesch readability formula, which was used for ratings in the first issue has been replaced by the use of the Fry Readability Graph. The two formulae correlate highly with each other so ratings across the two issues can be compared. However, we could no longer afford the expense of using a computer and the Fry Graph is much more speedy in calculation than Flesch when the work is done by hand.

Special thanks are due to the teachers attending the D.A.S.E. (The Teaching of Reading) at Edge Hill College who have not only taken part in the reviewing of the books along with many other members of U.K.R.A. but have also spent many hours calculating the readability levels of a number of samples from each text.

A number of letters have been received from readers and publishers. We are most grateful for the comments and suggestions made and have endeavoured to take as many as possible into consideration in the production of this second issue. The editorial staff are anxious to provide the best possible service and hope that any reader who feels they have helpful advice to offer will write in.

Donald Moyle

Using the Journal

The following background information is given to aid the reader in interpretation of the entries.

Readability ratings

As yet there is much to learn concerning the combination of elements within text which result in any individual reader finding a text easy or difficult to read. A number of important factors such as interest, motivation, background knowledge and learning style can only be estimated for each known reader.

Two ratings are given. The teacher rating is always stated as a range as it has been compiled from the subjective judgment of a number of teachers. Indeed, recent research suggests that ratings of individual passages from a total text may give a rather inaccurate picture of the reading level of a total book so that the expression of readability levels in terms of ranges seems more appropriate than a single reading age.

Subjective judgment however is always constrained by the particular experience of the judge and it was thought worthwhile to parallel such judgments by the use of a readability formula. On some occasions the results of the use of a formula on small samples of text from a total book will be seen to vary considerably from the teacher estimate.

The Fry Readability Graph estimates passage difficulty on the basis of average number of syllables and sentences per 100 words. The error factor in readability measures can be quite large but they give a reasonable estimate for the purpose of considering the level of books prior to purchase.

Interest age

To parallel the reading difficulty level, the reviewers have suggested the age range of children who would find the content interesting and the format acceptable.

Library Classification

Many schools now classify their books according to one of the library classification schemes.

In order to lessen the load of the teacher or school librarian, the classifications according to the Dewey and Bliss systems have been listed for each non-fiction text. These two classifications appear to be the most widely

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used by school libraries. Obviously, there is some leeway in the exact sitings of books within a given category but the editors hope that the information given will be helpful.

The following reference books have been used to arrive at the classifications given:

CHAMBERS, MARGERY. *Introduction to the Dewey Decimal Classification for British Schools.* Published by Forest Press Inc., for the School Libraries Association, 2nd Edn. 1968.

Abridged Bliss Classification: Revised for School Libraries by Bliss Classification Working Party. School Library Association, 1970.

Lists and Indexes

Each book reviewed is given a review number. The first two digits refer to the year of the review, the other digits refer to the number of the review within that year.

The journal is classified first according to age range and then sub-divided into subject sections.

Two indexes are provided to aid ease of access to particular reviews. These are an author and title index and a subject index. Consultation of the index will give reference to the review entry by both review and page numbers. Cumulative indexes will be supplied at intervals in the future.

Viewing the Materials Reviewed

In making selection of books for purchase it is helpful to be able to view them in advance and consider them together with the reviews. Most publishers will send books but not larger items such as kits on approval. This, of course, involves time and expense for the teacher, especially if the decision is taken not to purchase.

Many colleges and teacher's centres have extensive displays of books where teachers may examine publications at their leisure.

Copies of all books reviewed in this journal will be retained at Edge Hill College and will be referenced by their review numbers for ease of access. The Language Resource Area is open for visits from teachers in term time, Monday—Thursday from 9.00 a.m. — 9.00 p.m. and on Friday from 9.00 a.m. — 5.00 p.m.

Books for Nursery Schools

77-60 KENT, J. and VAN DER MEER, R. *Fred, Mags & Creep.* (8 titles). MacMillan. 1976. 45p. each. 16 pages. Readability—Teacher Rating 6.5—7.0. Interest Age Range, 4.0—7.0.

This series of eight books introduces the boy and girl who are Fred and Mags. The third character, Creep, is a large python who is friendly and helpful. Each book narrates an episode in the daily activities of the children, e.g. the playground or garden. They are quite large sized books, beautifully illustrated with clear unambiguous pictures. The print is neat, and large with one complete sentence or four small phrases to the page. The books should be ideal for discussion and language development in the nursery school or for use as supplementary readers in the infant school.

See also Review Numbers 77-64, 65, 66, 67, 72, 74, 76, 86, 88.

Books for Infant Schools

Reading and Language Development

77-61 COLE, M. and J. *Bod* (6titles). Methuen. 1977. £0.35p. each. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.3—8.5. Teacher Rating, 7.6—9.0. Interest Age Range, 6.0—7.0.

These small size books contain the adventures of a rather non-descript, young child — "Bod". The stories centre around village type characters and situations — that are all friendly and lonely. This does make for rather boring escapades. The readability levels and interest levels are discrepant, thus making the books more suitable for young competent children.

77-62 FISHER, R. M., HYNDS, M., JOHNS, A.M. and McKENZIE, M. G. *Sparks Readers, Stage 5.* (4 titles—Nos. 5—8). Blackie. 1976. £0.48p. each. 16 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, The Easter Egg—7.8, The Birthday Present—7.3, The Holiday Bus—8.3, The Punch and Judy Show—7.6. Teacher Rating—7.0. Interest Age Range, 6.0—8.0.

When viewed as part of the larger reading scheme with which they are associated, these books will competently fulfil the function of supplementary readers. The content is pleasant but uninspiring and whilst typical of the interests of 6 to 8 years olds, they lack excitement and adventure. Some titles present children from minority ethnic groups. They would perhaps have their best usage among those children who master the early stages of reading without too much difficulty.

77-63 GRENDER, I. (Ed). *Sophie, Sam & Betsy Books.* (6 titles). Kiddicraft. 1977. £0.25p. each, 30 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, The Sunflowers 9.0, The Ladybird, 10.5, The Racing Cart, 6.9, The Treasure Hunt 9.4, The Painters, 8.0, The Rainbow, 8.2. Teacher Rating, 7+-10+. Interest Age Range, 6.0—7.0.

Sophie, Sam and Betsy are triplets and their friend is "Professor Much to be discovered". He introduces them to their surroundings and through him

they learn about colour, shape, number and their natural environment. The books are quite small, as is the print face, but they are delightfully illustrated with pictures that help the understanding of the text. They would be excellent books for parents to read to children as well as being extension readers and class library books. The reading level, however, is somewhat high for the age of child who would most enjoy the content.

77-64 HALL, T. *Sound & Sentence Series.* (18 titles). G.P. Alexander. 1976. 16 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, Insufficient text for a readability rating. Interest Age Range, 4—8.

As the title of this series suggests, these books are concerned with promoting an awareness of beginning sounds by placing these in a series of sentences. Each book takes one sound, e.g. 'c' and provides pictures and sentences to accompany its learning—thus "I like my car", "I like my cat" and "I like my camera". The format is very clear and systematic and the accompanying illustrations are humorous as well as colourful. The series should supplement most reading schemes and will certainly help the realistic development of sounds and their usage.

77-65 HUNT, R. *Chutney Series.* (6 titles). A. Wheaton & Co. 1977. £1.25 each. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 6.5—9.0. Teacher Rating, 8.0—9.0. Interest Age Range, 4—10.

These stories are usable for reading to as well as by children. They present the adventures of a boy, Chutney, who is involved in a variety of activities including going to the circus and being rescued by a helicopter. The content is enjoyable but in some instances the storyline is slender though both story and information type material is presented. The books are sturdily bound, bright and attractive.

77-66 LE JEUNE, M. and M. *Superbutch Books.* (5 set, 20 titles). Cassell. 1977. £0.15p—£0.35p. each, 16—32 pages. Readability—Teacher Rating, Pre-reading—Early Reading. Interest Age Range, 4—5.

The Lookbooks tell a story in pictures for the discussion of situations and vocabulary. Stages 2—4 are simple, illustrated stories based on the adven-

tures of a dog, Butch. The illustrations are not always fully relevant to the text and confusion might arise for the child. However, as they would be best used as the basis for discussion between teacher and children such problems should be overcome. The format and print is attractive.

77-67 MELSER, J. *Minibooks.* (Steps 1—4, Books 1—8 in each step, 32 titles in all). Collins. 1976. Readability—Formula Rating, 6.0—7.5. Teacher Rating, 6.0—7.0. Interest Age Range, 4.0—6.0.

These are small books with an informational background covering many topics of interest to young children. The interest level and content of the books would seem to appeal more to the pre-school age. The illustrations are colourful and relevant to the text. In the first set the topics are diverse and seemingly unrelated. The second set is developed along thematic lines—more organised and acceptable. In sets three and four, sequencing is introduced in the form of simple stories. Although the books are graded into four sets, the readability levels are not progressive. Step 2, Boys and Girls, Animals, have a readability of 7 years but Set 4 books are all at the 6 year level.

77-68 HART, N.W.M. et al. *Mount Gravatt Reading Programme.* (30 titles). Addison-Wesley. 1977. Pack A—£4.70, Pack B — £5.50. Readability—Formula Rating, Pack 'A'—too few words for calculation. Teacher Rating, Pack 'A'—5½—6 years. Formula Rating, Pack 'B', Rain, 8.9, Chocolate Crackles, 7.3, Playing Buses, 6.7, Colours and Numbers, 6.8, It's my Birthday, 6.4, My Secret Place, 6.5. The other 9 titles have too few words for calculation. Teacher Rating, Pack 'B'—6—6.5. Interest Age Range, Pack 'A'—5—6. Pack 'B'—up to 9.

Pack 'A': The contents of the books in this introductory pack represent some of the most immediate experiences of the young child, e.g. home, school, animals as well as witches and pirates. They are presented using a personal style, e.g. "My Bike"; "I've got a bike, it's new". Each book has approximately between four and eight pages, with illustrations that are varied and humorous. The type is large and clear and accompanies each picture. They would represent excellent opportunities for language development by both teachers and parents. They will, however, be difficult for a child to read

for himself but should provoke and invite the child to participate in the reading situation with an adult.

Pack 'B': This second pack extends development by using the further experiences of the child, e.g. My Kite, It's my Birthday and Playing Buses. In each book there are more sentences and pages but the personal style and format remain unchanged.

The programmes are quite different from that used by Standard Reading Schemes. They build up sets of language patterns and anticipations using a style that is evidenced in very young children's talking. The progression is therefore in this structure rather than in a controlled vocabulary. In view of this teachers may well see it as a set of supplementary readers rather than a programme for developing the important area of language anticipation and its link to reading.

They are printed on good paper, but they have no hard covers and in young hands might not wear well.

77-69 MACLEAN, M. and C. *The World and At Home.* (2 titles). J. M. Dent. 1976. £0.95p., 19 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7. Teacher Rating, 7—8. Interest Age Range, 5—9.

These are picture and word books, categorised according to subject matter—some pages include things to do, encouraging the child to discriminate and remember. As with all such books, there can be ambiguity between picture and accompanying word/sentence but noting this difficulty, the illustrations and presentation are clear and instructive. The books would not be very suitable for use by very young children without teacher help.

77-70 O'DONNEL, M. and MURRAY, P. *Horizons.* J. Nisbet. 1976. 128 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.6. Teacher Rating, 8.0. Interest Age Range, 7—9.

This extension book will be a welcome addition for any infant school where young fluent readers are to be found. There are 9 short stories, clearly written and well illustrated and all fiction, e.g. "The Magic Rock", "Jack and the Giants". It is well bound and a good purchase, particularly when allied with the Comprehension Cards.

A pack of 16 cards accompany the book containing questions or in some case pictures and follow up activities. The final card contains a crossword puzzle. The questions are almost entirely "Literal Comprehension" and serve the task of checking that the child remembers the explicit content of the books. However, in any busy classroom they will always be helpful aids, they are clear to read and easy to mark.

77-71 STEPHENSON, S. *Roll A Story*. 1, 2 and 3. Penguin Education. £0.60p. each. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0. Teacher Rating, 6.5—7.0. Interest Age Range, 6—9.

Each pack contains a number of hexagonal rollers which can be fitted together to form a variety of sentences. They provide the child with an aid to imaginative writing and an appreciation of the variety of ways in which parts of speech can be combined to add interest or humour to a situation. All children of between 6 and 9 years would enjoy using them whatever their reading level. The presentation is excellent and the format could be extended by the teacher.

77-72 TAYLOR, D. and J. *Early Learning Series 702—Rhymes*. (6 titles). Ladybird. 1976. £0.24p. each. Readability—Formula Rating, Talking Rhymes, 12.0, Dancing Rhymes, 8, Finger Rhymes, 12.5, Number Rhymes, 12.9, Memory Rhymes, Unreliable, Action Rhymes, Unreliable. Teacher Rating, 10—12. Interest Age Range, Various — Preschool to adult.

The span of interest level in this series of books is irrelevant — both children and adults love chanting rhymes, jingles and songs for a variety of reasons. Quite apart from pure enjoyment, they are an aid to auditory perception, memory recall, speech articlation and rhythm. The pictures which accompany the rhymes are very attractive and all six books should find places both in the home and primary schools.

77-73 TAYLOR, J. and INGLEBY, T. *Picture Dictionary*. Longman. 1976. £1.50. 47 pages. Readability—Teacher Rating, 6—8. Interest Age Range, 5—8.

In this picture dictionary the words and pictures are grouped into topics of common interest to the child such as The Family and The Country. The book could be useful for reference by children for spelling, as a starter for written work or discussion between child and teacher. The index at the end of the book is in another small type face and would be difficult for the child to use nor is there any list of contents to the subject sections at the beginning. The print and illustrations in the body of the book however, are clear and attractive.

See also Review Numbers 77-106, 107, 108, 114, 115, 131, 145, 150, 153, 159, 162, 163.

Fiction

77-74 ALTHEA. *Desmond Goes Boating.* Dinosaur Publications (S.B.) & Evans (H.B.). 1977, £0.35p. (S.B.), £1.75p. (H.B.). Readability—Formula Rating, 7.1. Teacher Rating, 7.0. Interest Age Range, 4—7.

A very attractive and well produced book with colourful uncomplicated illustrations and clear natural text. Desmond, a delightful dinosaur, turns out to be the hero of the day when he visits the park with Mrs Chubb. It is a story that will be enjoyed by all infant children, either for class participation or individual reading.

77-75 BLAKELEY, P. and WITT, E. *Teddy Bears Can't Go To School.* A & C Black. 1976. £1.35p. 20 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0. Teacher Rating, 7.5. Interest Age Range, 5—7.

Delightful illustrations enhance this story about a young boy and his Teddy Bear. Pre-school children and young infants will probably find the story interesting when read aloud by an adult rather than as their own reading book. A reference to school as a "nasty place" is perhaps a little disturbing.

77-76 BLAKELEY, P. and GIRBARDT, M. *Said Solomon Sadly.* A. & C. Black. 1976. £1.35. 26 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0. Teacher Rating, 8.5. Interest Age Range, 4—6.

This story is essentially to be read by an adult. It tells of Solomon's walk in the sun and his observations and thoughts—particularly when he gets tired, e.g. the little stream that cooled him and the bright red boat on which he

sailed. Its assets are its use of repetitive phrases in which young children could join and its good use of pictures. It will be predominantly for the Nursery/Infant child, and could be developed into oral language activity. Though the price seems great for a slim book, its presentation and durable binding make it good value.

77-77 GRETZ, S. *Ten Green Bottles*. Puffin. 1976. £0.50p. 31 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0. Teacher Rating, 8.0. Interest Age Range, 5—9.

This is a new illustrated version of a well-known children's song which coupled with the clarity of print and limited text per page, make it suitable for young infants or older hesitant readers. The fantasy illustrations are attractive and humorous and also provide a source of discussion for critical and creative thinking. Readability levels are high but from previous knowledge or from the repetitive and rhymed nature of the text, the child at a lower reading level will find that he can read something which at first sight he might have felt was too difficult for him.

77-78 HARRIS, R. *I Want To Be A Fish*. Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 22 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.7. Teacher Rating, 10. Interest Age Range, 6—7.

Jeremy, a young boy, repeatedly spoils his sister's outings by always wanting to be something else: "I want to be a fish". This happens at the fair, the farm and the seaside. However, at the theatre there is a conjuror who eventually cures this desire. The book has rather a young interest level when compared to its readability rating and its style also is stilted, particularly in the use of sentences beginning with "and" and "then". The illustrations are good and when considering its price, it is quite reasonable value.

77-79 HOBAN, R. *A Baby Sister for Frances*. Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 31 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0. Teacher Rating, 12.0. Interest Age Range, 6—7.

This is rather a sophisticated story with an underlying theme. It concerns a young bear who is trying to come to terms with not being the only child in the family anymore and how the parents help her to meet the situation. Though

the adult may get the message, many children will not. This book is obviously intended for the adult to read to the child for the readability level is far above the interest level. Even so, reading will probably need supporting with discussion and explanation. The line drawings are excellent and could serve as a basis for explanation of the meaning to the child.

77-80 HUNIA, F. *Read It Yourself Series.* (6 titles). Ladybird Books. 1977. 24p. each. Readability—Formula Rating, Red Riding Hood, 6.5, Three Little Pigs, 7.0, Jack and the Beanstalk, 7.5, Billy Goats Gruff, 7.5, Gingerbread Man, 9.0, Goldilocks, 8.0. Teacher Rating, Red Riding Hood, 6.5, Three Little Pigs, 7.0, Jack and the Beanstalk, 8.0, Billy Goats Gruff, 6.0, Gingerbread Man, 8.0, Goldilocks, 6.0. Interest Age Range, 5—8.

These traditional tales, with slight variations in story line from the originals, are written in large bold type using simple language. The illustrations are vivid and usually well related to the text. Very young hesitant readers should find these books a delight to read and their confidence and pleasure should grow as they complete each short book. They are useful as a basis for story method work.

77—81 McKEE, D. *The Day the Tide Went Out . . . And Out.* Picture Puffin. 1977, £0.50p. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0. Teacher Rating, 7.0. Interest Age Range, 6—8.

This is an interesting and amusing book which offers an imaginative explanation of the origin of the camel's hump and the pyramids. The antics of the animal characters in the lively illustrations are a source of enjoyment in themselves but could also be used to discuss the probability and realism of the story. It is suitable for upper infants and lower juniors as an addition to the classroom library—although discussion with the teacher may be necessary to reveal the subtlety of humour and the "preposterous" ideas involved.

77-82 MAHY, M. *The Boy Who Was Followed Home.* J. M. Dent. 1977. £2.50. 32 pages. Readibility—Formula Rating, 11.3. Teaching Rating, 9.0. Interest Age Range, 5—9.

This is a real find—an excellent and imaginative story for reading to the young infant child or to be read by the older infant or young junior child. A boy is followed home by a hippopotamus and a witch administers a pill to cure him of his "hippo trouble". It contains a good blend of fantasy and everyday occurrence. The print is clear, the illustrations attractive and informative and it is enclosed in a stout binding. Though the price seems high, the book is worth the expense for it will be a most popular acquisition for the book corner.

77-83 MAYNE, W. *Party Pants*. Knight (Hodder & Stoughton). 1977. £0.60p. 22 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.1. Teacher Rating, 8+. Interest Age Range, 5—8.

Netta is invited to a party but has no suitable pants to wear under her party outfit and the story follows the search for pants and the final result, namely as she wears trousers no one can see the pants. The story has appeal more to girls as boys may not sympathise with the feminine pre-occupation with clothes. Layout and illustrations are good and the story could be read to young infants or be read by older infants and young junior children.

77-84 STERN, S. *The Hobyahs*. Methuen. 1977. £1.60p. 16 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.0. Teacher Rating, 7.5—8. Interest Age Range, 6—8.

This is an old story which has been adapted and retold for young children. The Hobyahs, wicked creatures, invade the Turnip house and steal the daughter but Turpie, the dog, saves them all. On each page there are illustrations but these are printed in rather dark colours—no doubt to match the "scary" tale. The text that accompanies each illustration is rather difficult, being made up of a few sentences, which are themselves set in a "smoky" type. The book is expensive and more adaptive to teacher illustration and story telling.

77-85 STOYE, R. *Toots Bites Back*. Methuen. 1977. £2.95p. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.4. Teacher Rating, 12. Interest Age Range, 6—10.

This is a delightful story which narrates the adventures of Toots the dog. Each page has a large colourful picture which helpfully illustrates the text. The story is pleasing in its end as well as its adventures. Although the readability level is high, the story could be read to the 6—7 year old child and read by the 9 year old and fluent reader

77-86 WOLCOTT, P. *Badger Books* (10 titles). Addison Wesley, 1975-77. 11 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, Pickle, Pickle, Pickle Juice, 7.2, My Shadow and I, 6.0, Tuna Fish Sandwiches, 6.5, Beware of a Very Hungry Fox, 7.2, Where did that Naughty Little Hampster Go 6.5, The Marvellous Mud Washing Machine 6.2, I'm Going to New York to Visit the Queen 7.1, The Cake Story 7.0, The Forest Fire, 6.0, Super Sam and the Salad Garden, 6.5. Teacher Rating, 5—8. Interest Age Range, 4—10.

The Badger book series has 10 books in which each contain a story that uses a very small, highly repetitive vocabulary. In some, e.g. "My Shadow and I", there are only 12 words. Although this makes for ease of readability, other problems surface, e.g. vocabulary is not graded and emphasis has often to be placed on phrases, e.g. "Washing machine, wash, wash". However, some of the stories are very humorous and fun to say, but often much of the content has to be carried by the illustrations. These are bright and colourful with a picture book quality. In particular the print is very clear and stands out well from the illustration. Such books could very well be considered suitable for beginning readers at any age in the infant school. Aspects of their American origin are evident.

See also Review Numbers 77-106, 107, 108, 114, 115, 131, 145, 150, 153, 159, 162, 163.

Non-Fiction

77-87 ALTHEA. *Castle Life*. Dinosaur Publications (S.B.) & Evans Bros. (H.B.). 1977. £0.35p. (S.B.) and £1.75p. (H.B.) Readability—Formula Rating, 11.0. Teacher Rating 10—12. Interest Age Range, 7—12.

An interesting and informative book about life in a medieval castle. The facts are presented in simple constructed text and attractive coloured pictures which aid the comprehension of the necessary technical terminology involved. This

book should appeal and be of benefit to a wide range of children from fluent 6-year olds to much older hesitant readers, though in the case of the latter they feel the illustrations a little childish.
The book offers very good value in the large hard-backed and small paper-backed editions.

77-88 KEEN, M. and WEST, M. *Talkabout Series.* (4 titles—Holiday, Gardens, Starting School and Bedtime). Ladybird, 1977. £0.24p. each, 52 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, Teacher Rating. Interest Age Range, 4—7.

This helpful series of "Talkabout" books are intended to be used as starting points for conversations with quite young children. They use situations that have great importance to the small child. The thematic approach presents realistic illustrations such as sleeping in a caravan, ship and tent, as well as people who work whilst others sleep—this includes Santa Claus. There is also a section on counting as well as one with nursery rhymes. At the back of each book there are helpful suggestions which indicate the possible ways to extend the discussions. They are excellent value for money.

77-89 CLARKE, M. *Words for Topics Series.* (6 titles). Macmillan. 1976. £0.42p. each. 14 pages. Library Classification: Dewey, *Eary animals and people*, 913, *Romans* 937, *Around our Town* 380, *A Baron and his Castle* 940.1, *At the Airport* 387.7, *At the Docks* 387. Bliss, *Early animals and people* LAK, *Romans* LS, *Around our Town* TN HK, *A Baron and his Castle* MB, *At the Airport* TNW, *At the Docks* TNV. Readability, Because of the nature of the content—lists of words—it is impossible to give a readability level to these books. Interest Age Range, 7—11.

These books provide, as the title says, words often required by children seeking to work on topics. The words are presented on the relevant feature within a total picture of the topic setting. There are, however, always ambiguities in such situations, e.g. the word for "waste-paper bin" is printed on the walls of the toilets. Despite this, the books are clear, precise and helpful.

Books for Junior Schools

Reading and Language Development

77-90 BONING, R.A. *Multiple Skills Series, Book E.1.* Lowell & Lynwood (USA). 1976. Approximately £1.00. 56 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.5—10.5. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 10—13.

This programme intends to develop skills associated with recognising the main idea, noticing detail, drawing conclusions and knowledge of vocabulary. The basic layout is attractive and clear but its presentation and development of the skills is stereotyped and very limited in scope. The book's introduction reveals that it ought to be used in conjunction with two other supportive skill programmes that also need to be purchased. Within this single text the exercises are well presented and finely graded but there is, however, no helpful guidance to the teacher nor caution as to the problems of transfer of reading skills taught in isolation.

77-91 GROVES, P. and GRIMSHAW, N. *The Goodbodys.* E. Arnold. 1976. £0.92p. 47 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0. Teacher Rating, 9—12. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

This book brings different types of English exercise which should stimulate the jaded appetites of the nine to fourteen year old. It has a bright, racy content and its skilful use of cartoon type material lends extra interest to subjects relevant to the child's daily life. The exercises are original and often amusing. Language and vocabulary work are followed by a dialogue in comic strip fashion. It has great appeal and will be seen as a good buy in most classrooms.

77-92 LANE, S.M. and KEMP, M. *Poems for Writing* (2 titles, Books 1 and 2). Blackie. 1976. £0.98p. each. 47 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, Book 1, 8.5. Book 2, 11.5. Teacher Rating Book 1, 8—9, Book 2, 12—13. Interest Age Range, Book 1, 7—10. Book 2—11—14.

The books present exercises on short poems of varying literary quality. The tasks are not always related to the starter poems nor are they necessarily geared to their enjoyment. The tasks are not very imaginative and others could have been designed which would have encouraged greater creativity. *Legibility is sometimes poor* due to coloured pages and the photographic realism of the illustrations does not necessarily add to the quality of the material.

77-93 *Listening & Reading, 1 and 2.* BBC. 1976. Readability—Formula Rating, *The Winged Horse* 9.6, *Birds and Beasts in Verse* 11.0, *On the Banks of Plum Creek* 11.2, *The Magic Pumpkin* 10.8, *The Acorn Man* 11.0, *Jacko,* 10.3, *The First Day of School* 8.9, *Dad and the Bull* 10.9, *My Father was a Fisherman* 8.8, *First Flight* 9.8, *The Tree God,* 12.0, *Tripple—Trapple* 10.7 *Practical Cats* 12.7, *Sinbad the Sailor* 11.6, *The Cat that Walked a Week* 10.0, *Zlatch the Goat* 12.0. Teacher Rating, 7.6—12.6. Interest Age Range: 8—12.6.

A valuable series which could well help children to enjoy reading without the anxiety of making many errors and losing understanding. Used as a broadcast series the voice of the reader presents an example for the child to follow and thus help him with the development of his reading fluency. There are no illustrations apart from the outline on the book's cover—but this need not necessarily be a handicap since it directs the child's attention to the print and its message.

77-94 *Listening & Reading, 3.* (8 titles). BBC. 1977. 16—48 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Palm Island Plane Factory* 13.2, *Badgers and Hedgehogs,* 9.5—12.4, *Pictures* 11.8, *That Mark Horse* 10.7—12.6, *Early Days* 12.3, *The Monkey's Paw I* 13.4, *The Monkey's Paw II* 12.4, *The Wild Cat and the Kitten* 13.7. Teacher Rating, 14+. Interest Age Range, 8—12.

These eight books accompany the BBC Radio Programme broadcast in Summer 1977. The programme itself was of ten minutes duration and was a straight reading of the booklet. It was recommended that they be recorded. The accompanying notes to the series outline how reading can be developed and pay particular attention to extending the stories into discussion and

personal writing activities. The booklets are clearly presented but the readability levels are high considering that they are aimed at reluctant readers. Considerable preparation by the teacher will be needed if the taped recordings are not available.

77-95 McCULLAGH, S. *Hummingbirds.* (11 titles). Hart-Davies Educational. 1976/77. £0.85p. each. 48 pages. Readibility—Formula Rating, 8.0—9.6. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range, 7—11.

A delightful series, each book having a strong fairy tale element and often an air of magic and mystery. The content is undoubtedly above average in interest and attractiveness to the intended age of readers. They could be used as a series or as individual stories. Size of print and amount of illustration appear to relate to the variable levels of readability among the books. Within each book the style of illustration differs and some styles are more successful than others. It seems a pity that a more durable type of binding was not used.

77-96 McCULLAGH, S. *Whizz Bang Series.* (4 titles). Longman. 1976. £0.50p. each. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0—9.4. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range, 7—9.

Excellent, imaginative fairy stories yet despite princesses and witches, they are credible and relevant to present day situations. Some stories also have a moral and social concern set in a splendid allegorical style. Content and style varies from book to book and some may appeal more than others to any one child. They could be used effectively as supplementary readers, for the class library or be read to the children. Illustrations are rather traditional in concept but they are relevant to the text where a very clear type face has been employed.

77-97 SMITH, J. *Spelling.* (Books 6, 7 and 8). Cassell. 1977. £0.42p. each. 40 pages. Readability—Teacher Rating, 10—12. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

These three books promote the development of more complex spelling patterns by using context and general experience as aids to selecting and constructing the correct word. A quiz type format is used that is both helpful and novel. Each page is clearly set out and accompanied by black and white illustrations where appropriate. However, as with most aids to spelling, there needs to be a teacher to correct and monitor progress.

77-98 STAGG, S.A. and WYNNE, J.A. *Carry on Reading Series.* (Books 1—3). Schofield & Sims Ltd. 1977. £0.75p. 128 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Book 1* 9.0, *Book 2* 12.0, *Book 3* 10.5. Teacher Rating, 8—11. Interest Age Range, 8—12.

In each of these books there are a variety of short stories, e.g. Book No. 3 has 24. Each story is itself quite short, 4—7 pages in length and after three or four stories have been told, there follows a short set of questions of the "How well did you read" type. These are limited to testing literal comprehension only. The short stories are themselves quite interesting and would serve as leisure reading as well as aids to topic work. Although somewhat traditional the content is conveyed with the aid of small but well designed illustrations which act as self checking devices of the exercises. These books can be used quite confidently with the junior school child who is succeeding in reading.

77-99 STAGG, S.A. and WYNNE, J.A. *Mind Your Language.* Longman. 1977. £0.50p. 49 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.8. Teaching Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 9—11.

The topic of "language work" is dealt with in an interesting and quite novel way, e.g. the "Tell us More" activity presents a "Bus Stop Queue" and the pupil is asked to identify the person who is strong, angry, mysterious, etc. There then follow activities which present the teaching of grammar, e.g. nouns are described as bones, verbs as muscles and adjectives rather like the "clothes people wear". This workshop format is very successful and the analogies used intriguing and novel. More of these books for the younger child would be helpful as this results in a real knowledge of the nature and functions of language.

77-100 YOUNG, J. and P. *Passwords: Approach Book*. Oliver & Boyd. 1977. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.2 Teacher Rating, 7—8. Interest Age Range, 7—8.

This book takes each letter of the alphabet and combined activities in prose, verse and word games, to stimulate oral and written development. The word rhymes which commence each unit are orientated to the very young child, whilst some of the writing patterns are in cursive style and therefore more suited to the middle junior child. Apart from this discrepancy, the book is a pleasant and attractive approach to language work which is colourful and inviting. However, for the younger child the pages might seem overcrowded and difficult to follow.

See also Review Numbers 77-65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 183, 184, 185, 295, 296, 297.

Fiction

77-101 BARRIE, A. *Fly for Three Lives*. Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 141 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.2—12.0. Teacher Rating, 10—13. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

This is another authentic and dramatic Jonathan Kane story about political gangsters and stolen planes. It is well up to the standard set by earlier stories and should give much pleasurable reading. The readability level, however, varies from page to page and so care would need to be exercised in matching the child's ability level to the book. Adult paper back type presentation enhances its attractiveness to the older child.

77-102 BARRIE, A. *Operation Midnight*. Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 139 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.3. Teacher Rating, 11—13. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

Alexander Barrie the author of the book is himself an experienced pilot and this is reflected in the authenticity and reality of the story. Its theme is the rescue of an important man—Ephraim Dèmir from his border hideout in Africa. It is an exciting tale, ideal for silent reading, although the line drawings which accompany it are rather poor. The readability level makes it available only to the better readers in the interest age range but older, less fluent readers could still find the content attractive.

77-103 BAXTER, G. *Special Delivery*. Methuen. 1977. £0.55p. 128 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.8—12.0. Teacher Rating, 9—11. Interest Age Range, 8—12..

This is an adventure story concerning Simon and Sarah—twins, and their sister Margaret. Their friend, Mathew, keeps a small-holding and also operates a delivery round with the children's help. Unfortunately, during bad weather the delivery van skidded on the ice, putting Matthew in hospital with concussion. To the rescue came the three children and a rather temperamental donkey called Josephine. Further adventures follow—turkey thieves are caught—all exciting and lively reading for library and pleasure. The readability level, however, is a little high for the lower part of the interest age range.

77-104 BERRISFORD, J.M. *A Colt in the Family*. Knight (Hodder & Stoughton). 1977. £0.60p. 120 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.5—13.5. Teacher Rating, 10—12.5. Interest Age Range, 8—13.

This is a quite acceptable and interesting story about two girls, Penny and Jane and their determined attempt to train an unbroken colt. It is full of helpful hints about safe riding and proper training as well as wholesome adventure and danger. Ideally, it will suit top junior and lower secondary girls, providing good leisure time reading. Boys, however, might well find that it does not suit their interests. The readability level demands a higher reading ability than some who might find the content interesting will possess.

77-105 BERESFORD, E. *The Island Bus*. Methuen. 1977. £0.60p. 141 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

This is a children's adventure story concerning a boy whose island way of life is threatened by the advent of strangers who wish to build a holiday camp there. The 'bus' in the title plays a prominent part in the dramatic turn of events. Whilst the type is large and well spaced, the illustrations and format are a little dull. However, it will provide additional reading for middle and upper juniors.

77-106 BISSET, D. *The Story of Smokey Horse.* Methuen. 1977. £1.80. 96 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.5—9.4. Teacher Rating, 8. Interest Age Range, 6—9.

The variety and number of stories make this good value. Suitable for boys and girls between the ages of 6—9. Complexity of style such as stories within a story make this more suitable as a book to be read aloud to children. There is a good mixture of characters and situations. Smokey has many interesting adventures including his performance as a pantomime horse. Many of the unlikely situations such as travelling on the underground will appeal to children's sense of the ridiculous. Some of the situations, e.g. adventures of "Nothing" where nothing has a voice and has to move out of a pocket when something else is put in could need explanation but could also lead to interesting discussion among children.

77-107 BLAKE, Q. *The Adventures of Lester.* (Jackanory Stories). BBC. 1977. £2.07. 96 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.7. Teacher Rating, 9. Interest Age Range, 6—9.

A beautifully written and presented book which will appeal to all children between the ages of 6 and 9 years. Reading age of the book is 9 years but younger children would enjoy listening to these stories. A mixture of realistic objects and situations with a twist of fantasy and humour. The book has continuity but each chapter could be read as a short story, e.g. The Wibbly Wobbly Man's problems are sorted out when the three main characters, Lester, Otto and Flap Eared Loma set him up in business in a cave full of distorted mirrors where he will no longer feel different. The print is clear, illustrations attractive and uncluttered—a well presented book altogether.

77-108 BREINBURG, P. *Sally Ann in the Snow.* The Bodley Head. 1977. £2.50p. 28 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.8. Teacher Rating, 8—10. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

This is an excellent story presented in a well bound, well illustrated book. The main character, Sally Ann, is afraid to go tobogganning in an old box and is subject to tormenting and jeers from those who succeed. She overcomes her fear, almost by accident and then appreciates and enjoys the excitement of tobogganning. The story is clearly printed and developed carefully and

simply. All the illustrations depict children from multi-ethnic origins and Sally Ann herself is a black child. Vocabulary and phrasing are quite sophisticated in parts.

77-109 BRINSMEAN, H.F. *Under the Silkwood.* Cassell. 1976. £0.70p. 114 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.4—12.2. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.5. Interest Age Range, 9—12.

This is the story of two adolescents, George was "short and thickset" and Terry who was "tall like celery". They both live in Australia and have just left school. Before they start work, however, they go to stay with "Cousin Glad" who lives at Chindera on the Gold Coast "where the millionaires are". They experience many different activities—especially water-skiing and working in a prawn factory. This is a good story. The characters and their relations are warm, real people who can be easily pictured in the different situations. The print is clear, sentences well constructed and illustrations stylised and effective. It is good value for money.

77-110 BROWN, J. *Flat Stanley.* Methuen. 1977. £0.45p. 69 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.6. Teacher Rating, 8.0—9.0. Interest Age Range, 7—9.

Stanley Lambchop was quite a normal boy until he woke up one morning to find that he was only half an inch thick—his bedroom display board had fallen on him during the night. In his new form he can do incredible things, like slipping down a grid to retrieve things and hanging in a picture frame to catch thieves. The story is totally amusing with an ingenious ending. The type is clear and easy to read and accompanied by black/white illustrations in cartoon format.

77-111 CHATFIELD, K. *Issi's Magic Tonic.* Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 143 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.1. Teacher Rating, 12+. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

Issi Noho, featured on television, the Panda with magic powers creates trouble for himself and friends by the inaccuracy of his magic. It appears a derivative of Paddington and suffers rather in comparison. Type is clear but

poor quality paper has been used in the production and the few black and white illustrations are not very attractive. The readability level is very high for the age at which the book is aimed.

77-112 CUNLIFFE, J. *Giant Kippernose & Other Stories*. Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 111 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.5. Teacher Rating, 11+. Interest Age Range, 8—10.

Nine short stories about giants with British geographical settings. The stories are new but they are written in the folk tale tradition. The book makes for easy reading and carries a good number of illustrations, many of them amusing. Extremely good value for money.

77-113 CUNLIFFE, J. *The Great Dragon Competition*. Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 120 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.8. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

Ten short stories about dragons—nice, nasty, foolish and clever—fill this book. Each has a competent style and good descriptions with plenty of pace and involvement. The book will make good leisure time reading as well as providing helpful background fantasy for topic and art work. The readability level varies however from page to page.

77-114 DARKE, M. *My Uncle Charlie*. Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.7. Teacher Rating, 8.0. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

This will be useful supplementary reading for the early junior child. It tells the story of a young girl who eagerly waits the return of her Uncle Charlie. He is a sailor and after each voyage always brought gifts. The story carefully builds up reading interest and anticipation by delaying the young girl's gift until the very end—it is of course a very unusual present. This is extremely good value for money—clearly printed and well illustrated.

77-115 DENTON, J. *The Colour Factory*. Puffin. 1976. £0.50p. 29 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.1. Teacher Rating, 8.5. Interest Age Range, 8—9.

An imaginative story told with superb vivid illustrations. It tells of the children visiting a factory that makes colours. The explanations are fictitious but ingenious "We make our yellow at night" the man explained "I know" said Lyn, "You make it from the moon". The book is a splendid interlude in which imagination strays and develops. It can be used as a stimulus to discussion as well as supplementary and private reading for fun.

77-116 DERWENT, L. *The Boy from Sula.* Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 143 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 10—13.

Young Mangus Macduff and his island community of Sula are threatened by a millionaire's plan to build a holiday resort which might destroy the solitude and environment of Sula. Various adventures follow in an attempt to thwart this take-over but finally Ebenezer Smith and his Enterprises realise that they have nothing to offer a community where there is so much talent and so much that is valuable.

77-117 ELLIOTT, J. *The Birthday Unicorn.* Puffin. 1977. £0.45p. 60 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.4—10.4. Teacher Rating, 9—10+. Interest Age Range, 8—10.

An excellent short fantasy story describing the escapades of a magical unicorn and a dozy Dodo—the temporary pets of a boy named Alexander. There are good descriptive passages of the exciting adventures which are humorously told, satirical in parts and therefore perhaps appreciated more by competent 10—11 year olds. It would be a good story to read to a class or be read privately. The illustrations are very good and it is excellent value for money.

77-118 FARMER, P. *William and Mary.* Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 156 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.6—12.9. Teacher Rating, 9—12. Interest Age Range, 9—12.

Mary is the only daughter of the Headmaster of a boy's boarding school. During the Easter holiday, she makes friends with William, who is the owner

of a scimitar shaped shell which can do wonderful magic. A Biblical picture on the wall can become a scene around them as can a cinema picture of a Walt Disney film or a piece of music. It is quite naturally "sea magic" and so develops a story full of fantasy and excitement. The ending is ideal giving much satisfaction and the book is a good addition for middle-school libraries.

77-119 FOX, P. *A Likely Place*. Pan. 1977. £0.40p. 62 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.4, Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.5. Interest Age Range, 9—11.

Paula Fox has the ability to reach right into the minds of children and in this story of a nine year old boy's week while his parents are away, she does just that. In the first part of the book are contained some humorous descriptions and dialogue. In the second part Lewis meets Mr Madruga, an old man from Barcelona who has been living in America for the last three years. He, like Lewis, has difficulty with spelling. The character of the old man is skilfully drawn, but the adventure of finding a cave in the park is somewhat mundane. The book is quite short with clear print and some excellent line drawings and seems most suitable for boys of about nine or ten with a reading level of 10 plus.

77-120 FOX, P. *The Slave Dancer*. Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 143 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.7. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.6. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

A thirteen year old boy is covered with canvas, trussed up like a pig and roughly bundled aboard a large slaveship bound for Africa. Jessie experiences frightening adventures but as the seaman Benjamin Stout tells him 'You'll see some bad things, but if you did not see them, they'd still be happening so you might as well". He has a gift for playing a pipe and one of his tasks is to "dance the slaves". This is a sensitive story of storms and shipwrecks but its ending is valuable. As Jessie concludes "When I passed a blackman I often turned to look at him, trying to see in his walk the man he had once been before . . . he had been sold like cloth". The content will probably appeal more to boys than girls.

77-121 FREWER, G. *The Trackers.* Abelard. 1976. £0.45p. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.6. Teacher Rating, 11+. Interest Age Range, 9-12.

Nick and Terry were playing tracking when they came face to face with an injured leopard who had escaped from a safari park. Their game takes on new meaning as they help to catch the leopard. The plot is exciting and the book has a fairly even readability level. The upper junior with an interest in animals will find the book compelling.

77-122 GALLICO, P. *The Day Jean-Pierre Went Round The World.* Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 95 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.8—11.4. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 8—12.

A boy's guinea-pig is mistakenly sent to Addis Ababa instead of Paris. Letters arrive from places as far away as Pakistan and Honolulu and give splendid miniature descriptions of their writers. This amusing tale is beautifully told and will certainly appeal to animal lovers. The place names tend to raise the real level of reading difficulty above that suggested by the formula. Has amusing line drawings.

77-123 GARFIELD, L. and BLISHEN, E. *The God Beneath The Sea.* Corgi (Transworld). 1977. £0.65p. 168 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.5—13.0. Teacher Rating, 10.5—12.5. Interest Age Range, 10—13.

This book presents an original and adept re-telling of the Greek myths. There are 20 stories grouped into three sections but all are told so that a strong narrative unity pervades each element. The stories are developed in an exciting and heroic way so that they come alive with a dynamism that will appeal to a wide range of secondary pupils. However, sometimes the style is a little too ornate and also the illustrations are a little strange. Nevertheless this book can be warmly recommended as exciting leisure or class reading.

77-124 BREEN, B. *Flop & Mick & John & Me.* Cassell. 1976. £0.70p. 95 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.7. Teacher Rating, 10—10.5. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

Seven short appealing stories full of boyish interests with an Australian flavoured background. The front cover illustration gives an indication of its appeal and gang involvement. It has fast moving situations and experiences familiar to older boys. Each of the four characters retains a consistent predictable personality throughout the series. The outcomes are fairly easily predictable and relatively few adjectives and descriptive passages give the reader the chance to read quickly. The action moves at a rate to maintain interest. The familiar situations and the simple story line help the readability of the passages.

77-125 GREEN, W. *Red Snapper Night*. Cassell. 1976. £0.76p. 104 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.8. Teacher Rating, 9—9.5. Interest Age Range, 8—14.

This is an interesting adventure story about fishing which will certainly appeal to boys between 9 and 13 years. The character of Tony is well drawn within the fast moving plot. This describes his night of fear when red snapper fish come to feed. However, there are some words and experiences which could cause difficulty for slower readers and the black and white illustrations are possibly too sophisticated for the age range for which the book is intended. This might not deter the competent reader who should find this an exciting and stimulating story.

77-126 GROVES, P. and GRIMSHAW, N. *Monsters of Myth and Legend*. E. Arnold. 1977. £1.20. 96 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.6. Teacher Rating, 8.5—9.5. Interest Age Range, 8—13.

This book is a retelling in simple language of sixteen tales about heroes and monsters. Each story is accompanied by suggestions for development. using the format "look at the story again", further questions and things to do. Prefacing each story is also an introduction and a helpful pronunciation guide. The black and white illustrations which accompany each story are clear and helpful as is the size and quality of print. It would be a helpful book to supplement an English course being developed for older juniors and early secondary pupils.

77-127 HARDING, L. *The Children of Atlantis.* Cassell. 1976. £0.70p. 104 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11—12. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.0. Interest Age Range, 9—12.

This is an exciting believable story of an advanced people coming to Earth from another planet. The setting is millions of years ago when the Earth was still in its unsettled fiery infancy. Due to the disintegration of their own planet, the natives have to leave their golden cities and join the Earth. In their spaceships they leave and settle on an island—Atlantis. Their lives on the island are successful and peaceful—until disaster strikes a second time. This credible story should appeal to the modern space age child of about 9—12 years and has possibilities for teacher reading as well as dramatisation. It is well told and has plenty of adventure, enhanced by vivid description, clear print and appropriate illustrations.

77-128 HILL, D. *William and the Mutt.* Hamish Hamilton. 1977. £1.25p. 87 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.5. Teacher Rating, 10.5. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

William is frightened of dogs and his cousins have a large lovable dog called The Mutt. Situations are created to keep William and the dog apart but they don't always work. Finally William bravely saves the dog from being washed out to sea. The book could only be available in the class library at the top end of the junior school but could be read to younger children.

77-129 HUNTER, N. *Professor Branestawns Great Revolution.* Puffin. 1977. £0.45p. 136 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.5. Teacher Rating, 12.6. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

Professor Branestawn is engaged once more in inventing extraordinary things with their usual comic and catastrophic effects. A humorous story that should appeal to 9—13 year olds. The phraseology and style could cause some difficulties to the reader. Illustrations are sparse but add to the amusement.

77-130 KENNETT, J. *King Solomon's Mines.* Blackie. 1977. £1.30. 136 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.0—11.0. Teacher Rating, 10.5—12.0. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

This is an irresistible tale, competently retold by John Kennet. Its story needs little introduction but it contains all the elements which will traditionally appeal to children—mystery, imagination and excitement. It is a well produced book, printed on good quality paper and good value.

77-131 HOWE, R. *Hannibal Series* (3 titles). Ladybird. 1976. £0.24p. each, 51 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Hannibal Runs Away* 7.5, *Hannibal on Holiday* 7.6, *Habbibal on the Farm* 10.0. Teacher Rating, 8+. Interest Age Range, 7—9.

A delightful set of tales about a pet hamster, Hannibal. They are told within a background of natural history and introduce the reader to "the farm, the coast and the woods" and a variety of creatures. Sometimes the story becomes rather complex but the illustrations and format are quite attractive. They represent good value for money.

77-132 STUART, M. (re-told). *Gullivers Travels*. Ladybird. 1976. £0.24p. 51 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.3. Teacher Rating, 10.6—11.6. Interest Age Range, 9—12.

This well known tale of Gulliver's Travels has been retold by Marie Stuart using an easier literary style based on shorter less complex sentences. The type is clear, and well spaced and a colourful illustration accompanies each page. It is excellent value for money and could well be used with Upper juniors and first year secondary pupils.

77-133 LAWRENCE, A. *The Conjuror's Box*. Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 190 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.3. Teacher Rating, 10—12. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

On the middle shelf of the dresser sat a small green jug with a little white china cat climbing up the side to serve as a handle. Nothing special one might think until on a dreary afternoon "the tiny cat turned its head, looked straight at him and winked". So develops a charming take of the magic cat, Snowy, who takes Martin and Lucy into a strange new world to meet the

mysterious and evil Green Lady. The tale is a well written fantasy, about spells and adventures and has a delightfully satisfying ending. The print, however, is very small and closely packed but the strong story should overcome this difficulty.

77-134 LEE, J. *The Fabulous Manticopa.* Knight (Hodder & Stoughton). 1977. £0.60p. 192 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.6, Teacher Rating, 8.5—9.5. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

George is a member of a large family which is not very well off. Whilst on a visit to Miss Sheldrake's large house, he is introduced to a rather weird object. It is a "Manticopa" which has the head of a man and the body of a wild beast. It was small enough to hold in your hand or put in your pocket but it felt and looked evil. George becomes influenced by this weird evil beast and steals it, hoping to sell it and buy the longed for house of which his mother dreams. The journey into stealth, trickery and dishonesty is begun and the story develops around George and how he frees himself from the nightmare of this possession. It is a good story written in reasonably short sentences and chapters, that make for effortless reading.

77-135 LINDGREN, A. *Karlson on the Roof.* Methuen. 1977. £0.60p. 120 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.4. Teacher Rating, 10—12. Interest Age Range, 8—10.

Midge is a young boy aged seven who meets an unusual companion. This is a little man with a propellor on his back named "Karlson on the Roof" Needless to say, there are many adventures, ending with Midge's birthday party in which he receives a new companion—a puppy. The story is more suitable for children in the early and middle years of junior school but the high readability level does limit its audience to those children who can read very well.

77-136 MACFARLAND, I. *The Mouth of The Night.* Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 154 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.8—12.4. Teacher Rating, 11.0. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

This collection of fourteen Highland and Hebridean stories was originally

gathered by J.F. Campbell in the 1860s. They were traditional tales handed down by word of mouth to each new generation. Thus their content reflects the magic and enchantment of these old communities—singing apples, magic cauldrons and healing wells. It is good to maintain such stories and perpetuate such traditions; however, many told in this book are difficult to read silently and would benefit from the drama of being told by a teacher.

77—137 MARTIN, R. *The Wild Woods of Wyoming*. Abelard. 1976. £0.50p. 96 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.2. Teacher Rating, 8—9+. Interest Age Range, 8—10.

A story of two rival families who eventually reconcile themselves to being more neighbourly when neither of them win the Country Fair Competition for the ugliest person. It is a light hearted and amusing tale suitable for middle to upper juniors. The difficulty of the text is somewhat variable from page to page. It has large clear type and with some amusing line drawings.

77-138 MILLER, C. (re-told). *The Lost World*. Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 123 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.2. Teacher Rating, 10—14. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

This well written story is a retelling of Conan Doyle's Classic expedition to a prehistoric world deep in the jungles of South America. The sentences are fairly short and the reasonably simple vocabulary help increase the speed of the story enhancing the suspense element. It will interest a wide range of pupils and provide exciting leisure time reading. Contains some effective line drawings.

77-139 MILLER, M. *The Fearsome Tide*. Abelard-Schumann. 1976. £0.45p. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.2. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

"Sun and wind and mist and tide and tempest storm and rainie-O Loch and hill and road and boy And here you will remainie-O"

So was cast the spell by Old Loonie and Old Fylie, which bound the two Royal Swans to the Loch where they would remain forever. But . . . to the

rescue come the three elves Hummadun, Jony and Sandy. Middle juniors will find this story pleasant reading. The type is good, clear and well spaced and there are relevant black and white illustrations interspersed throughout the text.

77-140 MORGAN, G. *Lame Duck*. Abelard-Schuman. 1977. £0.50p. 61 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.0. Teacher Rating, 9.6—11.6. Interest Age Range, 9—11.

The opening episode of this story narrates the experience of Johnny who rescues an injured mallard duck from the Tangmere Creek. It serves to introduce the two main characters, Johnny a young boy staying with his Aunt Elizabeth, whilst his parents struggle with their own tangled lives, and Mr Bly, a weird and strange old man. A sensitive story develops around this friendship which should provide satisfying leisure reading for 3rd and 4th year junior children. The print, though easy to read, is somewhat large for this age range.

77-141 NEFF, L. *Simon was Safe*. Concordia. 1977. £0.30p. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.5—9.5. Teacher Rating, 9.0. Interest Age Range, 8—10.

The Passover story is told from the perspective of an eight year old boy Simon who lives in Pharaoh's Egypt. It's narration takes the style of a poem but although it is clearly told, its content might not be readily understood by children. The main idea of this story is difficult to grasp, therefore much discussion and preparation is necessary if young children are to appreciate it. The book uses a large type-face that is clear, and has coloured illustrations on every page.

77-142 NESBIT, E. *The Princess & the Cat*. Abelard-Schuman. 1977. £0.50p (S.B.) £1.75p (H.B.), 62 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.4. Teacher Rating, 12.0. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

Princess Everilda, a fairy tale princess, is evacuated from her palace and all its luxury, when the revolution begins. She escapes the crowd only to be caught by Ken and imprisoned to face death. However, her previous acts of

goodwill save her and instead she is taken in the "dragon flying motor car" to the lonely tower on Forlorn Island in the middle of the Perilous Sea. It is of course a magic tower with magic food and magic fires. Her only companion is the cat she saved from some malicious children—it is a magic cat that can fly and talk. The end of the tale is delightful with a moral that may only be perceived by the older child. It is however, a story to be told to younger children as well as read by older pupils. The point is clear, the plot a little complex but this should not impede its enjoyment.

77-143 PALMER, G. and LLOYD, N. *Journey by Broomstick*. Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 138 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.5. Teacher Rating, 9.5. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

A neat, concise set of ten stories, written around witches, wizards and giants. The stories fit well together and have the atmosphere of the traditional fairy tale—the characters being true to form and the outcome predictable. At only 40p. this is a good buy for the junior class library.

77-144 PALMER, G. and LLOYD, N. *Moonshine and Magic*. Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 128 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.0. Teacher Rating, 9.5. Interest Age Range, 9—11.

A new set of fairy tales but embracing all the traditional style and concepts of such stories. The appeal is rather more to girls than boys. The readability level is rather high in parts but at this price the format and illustration make it a good buy for the class library in the upper part of the junior school.

77-145 POSTGATE, O. *Bagpuss*. (3 titles). Carousel (Transworld). 1977. £0.40p. each. 28 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Mr. Rumbletum's Gumboot* 9.0, *The Song of the Pongo* 10.5, *Silly Old Uncle Feedle* 11.3. Teacher Rating, 9. Interest Age Range, 6—10.

Amusing stories written around this well known character. The text is interspersed with poems and each story contains subtle repetition which aids the readability but also enhance the interest. In some instances there is a high dependence on specific vocabulary, e.g. "firkin" and "mangoes" which the

teacher should discuss with the child. The books are beautifully produced with engaging illustrations and will be suited to the young fluent reader. It seems a pity that such attractive books have been produced in unsubstantial bindings.

77-146 POTTER, M. *Tony's Special Place.* The Bodley Head. 1977. £2.35. 126 pages.

The theme of this book develops around the importance and value of "Special Places". In this case, it is for Tony his own bedroom, organised to reflect his values and store precious things. His privacy is lost, however, when his grandfather comes to live with his family and he has, as a consequence to share his brother's bedroom. Nevertheless, Tony gradually learns of his grandfather's special place — his vegetable allotment. The story and adventure develops around this allotment, with an ending that is satisfactory for Tony; his grandfather and the reader. The vocabulary is reasonably simple but sentences tend to be rather long. The book has clear print and an attractive format with good line drawings.

77-147 PRELUTSKY, J. *The Terrible Tiger.* Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 15.5. Teacher Rating, 11.0. Interest Age Range: 7—9.

This is a story that must be read aloud to be appreciated. It tells in rhyme of the "terrible tiger" who eats everyone he meets. "And gobble, gobble down he went

For what the tiger said, he meant"

Told to young children it will be enjoyed even though the tiger remains unrepentent. The illustrations are very good and the print quite clear. All the victims who are eaten are as in most traditional tales, rescued unharmed. The readability level is high and therefore unlikely to be of great value as a library book to children of the age range who would enjoy the story. Some of the rhyming couplets and repetition however, make sections of it eminently suitable for use.

77-148 PULLEIN-THOMPSON, C. *The Second Book of Pony Stories.* Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 125 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.2. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 8—13.

This collection of "pony stories" spans countries as well as types of horse, e.g. Dartmoor Pony, Australian plains horse and George, the cart horse. Its content will appeal mainly to those who own, enjoy or work with horses and for them it will provide enjoyable leisure reading. Like so many books about ponies, the appeal tends to be more to girls than boys. The type face is rather small and the print closely set although the line drawings are of good quality.

77-149 REID, M.M. *The Noguls and the Horse.* Abelard. 1976. £0.45p. 63 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.7. Teacher Rating, 10.6—11.6. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

A car-bomb explosion in Northern Ireland kills a kitten and the story relates its consequences on Claire, its owner. She withdraws into herself, unresponsive, until the NOGULS (No Grown Up Leaguers) try to save the life of an old horse. It is a sensitive story but the two bomb explosions which are key points in the story could upset some children. Parents might feel that the story brings reality too near home. With this in mind, the book can only be recommended for older juniors and early secondary children. The format and print size are well chosen but there are very few illustrations.

77-150 ROGERSON, J. *King Wilbur the Third Series.* (4 titles). J.M. Dent. 1976. £0.75p. 20 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.4. Teacher Rating, 7—9. Interest Age Range, 6—10.

These books are based on a recent television series and as a result are likely to catch the eye of the child. The four stories recount the unusual, humorous activities of King Wilbur and members of his court. They contain a slapstick type of humour which children enjoy. Because the child may well have heard the story and by virtue of the funny illustrations which almost act as a comic strip presentation of the story they can be read by children with reading levels below that suggested by the readability ratings. The books are beautifully produced in very good durable form which makes them good value at 0.75p.

77-151 SAMPSON, D. *Grump and the Hairy Mammoth.* Methuen. 1977. £0.50p. 90 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.11. Teacher Rating, 9+. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

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Grump, an ugly caveman, living in the ice-age is bored. He has many problems, like cold feet and uncooked food. Together he and Herman, the hairy mammoth learn how to overcome all their difficulties. The book has a clear, well-spaced format and amusing cartoon style drawings. The paperback version is a good buy at 50p. and junior school children will enjoy and learn from the antics of the characters.

77-152 SLEIGH, B. *Ninety-Nine Dragons.* Penguin. 1977. £0.40p. 71 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.8. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

Two children, being unable to sleep, first count sheep and then dragons. But at the ninety-ninth dragon they suddenly realise that the sheep they have sent into the field will be eaten by the dragons that followed them. Beth and Ben wish themselves into the field and with the help of Father Bell-Wether lead the sheep to safety. This is not an exciting story and with a high readability level, it could be found rather dull by the child with the fluency to read it. The book has clear, well spaced type but few illustrations.

77-153 SOFTLY, B. *Ponda and William at Home.* Puffin. 1977. £0.40p. 93 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.4. Teacher Rating, 9+. Interest Age Range, 5—9.

Ponda is a panda-shaped pyjama case who lives with Cousin Winifred and her three cats in the country. William comes to visit and he and Ponda share many adventures. Half-way through the book Ponda goes to join William in his town home and supermarkets and tube trains replace fields and woods as the setting for their adventures. This collection of short stories is amusing and creates an atmosphere of enjoyment and happiness. They would make good bed-time reading for the young child or be enjoyed by the mid-junior fluent reader as private reading. The print and spacing is appropriate but the small number of black and white illustrations are rather dull.

77-154 STRANGER, J. *Book of Hanak's Animals.* J.M. Dent. 1976. £3.25. 103 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.3. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.0. Interest Age Range, 8—12.

In this anthology are collected stories and poems that reflect and describe each month of the year. Each month is personally introduced by the authoress presenting her reminiscences and followed by a short story prefaced by a description of its writer. Each is followed by a brief but appropriate poem. This is a pleasant and varied book that is beautifully bound and printed. It is a book to read as one's mood dictates or as a theme being developed requires its use for it embraces both information and literature. The animal paintings are excellent capturing mood, movement and habits.

77-155 STREATFEILD, N. *The Noel Streatfeild Birthday Story Book.* J.M. Dent. 1976. £2.95. 158 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.6—11.10. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

The Birthday Book is a collection of seasonal stories arranged under monthly headings. The stories are pleasant and varied in type but not very distinguished in terms of their originality or compellingness to children. The readability level varies somewhat but tends to be located in the upper half of the age range of children who might enjoy the content. Print is clear but there are few illustrations and it seems to be somewhat costly.

77-156 SUTCLIFFE, R. *Shifting Sands.* Hamish Hamilton. 1977. £1.25. 92 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.5. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

The story is set in the North of Scotland several centuries ago. It is basically about a young girl who is promised as a third wife to the chief. The life-style, superstitions and rivalries of the village community are well described but the community itself is threatened by encroaching sand dunes and the actions of its chief. It makes good reading and is clearly set out with very helpful black and white illustrations. The readability rating is perhaps somewhat of an exaggeration for the author frequently makes use of semi-colons where a new sentence could have been introduced.

77-157 SWINDELLS, R. *The Ice Palace.* Hamish Hamilton. 1977. £1.25p. 91 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.5. Teacher Rating, 11+. Interest Age Range, 8—11.

A small boy rescues all the captured children from the clutches of Starjik.

The rescue is full of fantasy and contrasts well with the cruelty of Starjik himself. The hazards are many and the ending is satisfying. This is a story that can be read aloud to a class as well as read privately for leisure reading. The type face used makes for easy reading though the readability level is rather high for the age group. However, this could have been further enhanced had either chapters or sections been introduced to enable the threads of the story to be picked up easily if the child had to break off reading.

77-158 TALBOT, T. *The Rescue*. Abelard. 1976. £0.45p. 63 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.5—11.6. Teacher Rating, 10.0—11.0. Interest Age Range, 10—13.

It is the end of the summer holidays and the traditional farewell feast is planned. Jacques father brings home a young lamb to kill for the feast but the horror of the lamb's slaughter makes Jacques try to save it's life. The story is set in France and many French expressions are used but these add to the reality of the setting rather than add to the reading difficulty. Format, presentation and good quality black and white illustrations combine with the quality of the writing to make the book good value.

77-159 TAYLOR, D. *Breadcrumbs & Clay*. Hamish Hamilton. 1976. £0.95p. 48 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.5. Teacher Rating, 9+. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

This is a topical story of a one-parent family, well written and illustrated. The various situations in which the little girl finds herself are described in a mature and sensitive manner. The concept of divorce is explained too and accepted by her, mother and child are both shown as being well-adjusted to their changed circumstances. Used as a library book it should appeal to girls of 7—10 years although the story line is relevant to the older girl and the occasional use of sophisticated vocabulary raises the readability level. The two tone illustrations on every page, clear print and durable binding make the book good value.

77-160 TISON, A. and TAYLOR, T. *Barbapapa's Ark*. Pan. 1977. £0.50p. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.3—12.0. Teacher Rating, 9—11. Interest Age Range, 12—14.

This is an interesting book that closely parallels the T.V. series of the same name. The pictorial presentation, the scenes and characters are identical to those of T.V. as are the environmental problems which the Barbapapas face. The difficulty presented by the book is its format which appears to be designed to appeal to the infant child yet the content and readability of the text indicate a middle school level. One can only hope that the familiarity of the content will override this problem.

77-161 VESTLY, A. *Eight Children & Rosie.* Methuen. 1977. £2.25. 127 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.9. Teacher Rating, 9+. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

Late on Christmas Eve, a taxi calls at the home of "Grandma, Mum and Dad and their eight children and dog" with a visitor. It proves to be a young man, Tony, who used to live there as a child. Mum and Dad find Tony's parents for him and then vacate their home so that Tony and his family can enjoy a special Christmas in their old home. On returning, Mum and Dad and their family find a present—Rosie: a cow, stabled in Grandma's bedroom and then follows a series of humorous adventures. This story would interest quite young children if told by an adult as well as being appreciated by middle junior children. However, some difficulties could arise from reading "Grandma's Scottish Dialect" The format and illustration of the book have been well designed.

77-162 VREDENBURG, E. *Grimms Fairy Tales.* Pan. 1977. £1.25. 138 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.7—13.4. Teacher Rating, 12+. Interest Age Range, 5—10.

This book contains nineteen of Grimm's well known fairy tales. The retelling is well undertaken and the atmosphere of the original comes across well. The small print on large pages combined with a rather high readability level means that the book is of use rather for reading to children than being read by them. However the adult should ensure that the child has the opportunity to look at the illustrations, some of which are in colour, which are drawn in a traditional style.

77-163 WEBB, M. *Mumfie the Elephant.* Carousel (Transworld). 1977. £0.50. 128 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.9. Teacher Rating, 9. Interest Age Range, 5—9.

Young children will enjoy this book. Its characters are brave yet realistically display an underlying sense of fear. The situations are exciting such as the all night vigil to catch thieving ferrets. The story content will be enjoyed by infant school children but the readability level means that only a minority will be able to read it for themselves. Many young juniors could however read it for themselves with equal enjoyment. The illustrations of puppets appear somewhat lifeless and contrived but it remains very good value at the price.

77-164 WEIR, R. *Uncle Barney & The Shrink Drink.* Abelard-Schuman. 1977. £0.50p. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.2. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 9—11.

A mad professor invents a shrink-drink which is tried out on a discontented family who live in cramped conditions. Apparently successful, complications arise when trying to feed them in their new home, a doll's house. The story would make a good serial for classroom telling or could be read with enjoyment by the individual child, particularly girls. It has a clear, easy to read format and a few black and white illustrations which make it quite good value in the soft-back edition. The book perhaps does not justify hard-back format where the cost is £1.75p.

77-165 WRIGHT, B. *The Canal Children.* Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 165 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.4—15.0. Teacher Rating, 10.5—12.5. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

This book cannot fail to find a large number of readers, particularly after its serialisation on television. It is a clear, uncluttered story about Betsy and her many adventures on the inland waterways. It has an appealing and well developed story line presented using a tyle which facilitates private as well as class reading.

See also Review Numbers 77-77, 82, 84, 85, 86, 186, 187, 192, 194, 195, 201, 202, 203, 206, 209, 211, 212, 215, 220, 227, 228.

77-166 ALEXANDER, R. *A Cat of Your Own.* Carousel (Transworld). 1977. £0.40p. 60 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 636, Bliss G2C. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.6. Teacher Rating, 11+. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

This is a complete child's guide on how to care for cats—not only how to feed and groom it but also how to understand its behaviour and illnesses. It is liberally sprinkled with humorous illustrations and also accompanied by small samples of poetry. It is a well written book with a most pleasing emphasis on the owner's responsibility for the animal. It represents good value for any child who loves cats.

77-167 *Ladybird Leaders, Series 737.* (6 titles). Ladybird Books. 1977. £0.24p. each. 51 pages. Library Classification, Dewey, *Deserts* 551, *Chocolate and Cocoa* 633, 664, *Bread* 630, 641, 664, *Coffee* 630, 641, 664, *The Stream* 574-92, *Fire* 352.3, 621.4, 614. Bliss, *Deserts* DDT, *Chocolate and Cocoa* UAQ, UW, *Bread* UW, *Coffee* UW, *The Stream* EMM, *Fire* RPN. Readability—Formula Rating, *Deserts* 9.0, *Chocolate & Cocoa* 11.2, *Bread* 9.5, *Coffee* 12.0, *The Stream* 9.2, *Fire* 10.9. Teacher Rating, 8.5+. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

This set of books is most suitable for lower and middle junior children. The facts and main points about each subject are clearly narrated and illustrated, although the readability levels show marked differences between the various titles in the series. At this price they continue to present exceptional value for money.

77-168 BENSON, B. *A Pole Star Series.* (4 titles). Cambridge University Press. 1977. £0.45p. each. 16 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 590, Bliss G. Readability— Formula Rating, 8.2—9.4. Teacher Rating, 8.0—9.0. Interest Age Range, 6—10.

The books contain descriptions of the life style and environment of camels, flies, leopards and beavers. A story style is used as each creature is personalised by the giving of a name. Sound information is imparted yet the reader is not overloaded with a multitude of facts. The illustrations are

attractive and support the reading of the text. They are rather more for reading through completely rather than for reference in relation to a topic.

77-169 BRILL, B., HARPER, E. and YGLESIAS, J.R.C. *History, Series 561.* (4 titles). Ladybird Books. 1977. £0.24p. each. 51 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 920, 942. Bliss L9, MU. Readability—Formula Rating, *Queen Victoria* 17.2, *Elizabeth Gaskell* 13, *John Wesley* 12, *Sir Francis Drake* 12. Teacher Rating, 10.0—12.6. Interest Age Range, 11—13.

This series of books is an interestingly written and factual account of famous people in British History. The illustrations are excellent, there being at least one to each page, but the type is rather small and cramped. The books can be used by competent readers to support their project work or to enhance reference skills, for within each book there is an index.

77-170 EDWARDS, C. *Let's Look.* (10 titles). Wheaton. 1977. £0.95p. pack. 8 pages. Library Classification, Dewey, Bliss. Readability—Formula Rating, *Lets Look at: Old Cars* 9.0, *Wrecks* 8.5, *Horses* 11.0, *Red Indians* 10.0, *Kites* 11.0, *The Loch Ness Monster* 8.0, *Trench Warfare* 11.0, *Witches* 9.0, *Freshwater Fish* 9.0, *Highwaymen* 10.0. Teacher Rating, 8—10. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

This series of booklets can best be described as presenting information passages, followed by a "Take a break" section which assesses the reader's ability to regurgitate the text. The topics covered are varied and the content of each is very factual and informative. However, in some too many facts are presented in too short a paragraph, e.g. a sixty-seven word paragraph had 6 sentences and 12 facts. This could certainly present difficulties. The materials themselves are flimsy and insubstantial but because they are low priced they could certainly be an aid to work study sessions with older pupils whose interest could over-ride the dull presentation.

77-171 KURTH, H., OLNEY, P., HALLY, F., DENTON, J. and GREGORY, P. *New Puffin Picture Books.* (6 titles). Puffin. 1975/76. £0.50p. each. 32 pages. Library Classification, Dewey, *Into the Earth* 550, *What's in a Pond* 574.92, *On the Seashore* 574.92, *Town Animals* 590,

In the Harbour 387, *On the Railway* 385. Bliss, *Into the Earth, What's in a Pond* EMM, *On the Seashore* EMN, *Town Animals* G, *In the Harbour* TNV, *On the Railway* TNP. Readability—Formula Rating, *Into the Earth* 12, *What's in a Pond* 13, *On the Seashore* 9.1, *Town Animals* 10.2, *In the Harbour* 10.7, *On the Railway* 10.5. Teacher Rating, 9—12. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

The format of these information books is clear and well structured. The subject of each book is developed using good quality large informative illustrations accompanied by a small amount of language that is pertinent and factual. Running through all books is the thread of ecology and conservation. The excellent use of colour, clear illustration and print makes this series superb value for money. They are, however, set out more for complete reading than for reference and lack either a contents list or an index.

77-172 LIFSHITZ, D. (Adapted GUNTHORP.) *France — The Land and Its People.* MacDonald. 1976. £1.95p. 63 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 914.4, 944. Bliss KVD, MR. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.11—9.10. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range, 8—13.

This book gives extensive coverage of aspects of France, the life of its people and its economy. It is lavishly and expertly illustrated with explanatory diagrams, graphs and maps as well as photographs and full colour pictures. It is easy to read continuously but because of its contents table and detailed index is excellent for reference in relation to topic work or training in the use of study skills. It will be welcome in the junior school but equally as it is simplified from a secondary level text, it can be used with slower readers in the secondary school.

77-173 PEEBLES, L., HARWOOD, D., CANDSDALE, G., HINTON, R.A.L. *Learnabout Series.* (4 titles). Ladybird Books. 1969. 1977. £0.24p. each. 48-52 pages. Library Classification, Dewey, *Cooking* 641, *Camping* 796.5, *Pets* 636, *Knots* 623. Bliss *Cooking* UXL, *Camping* HLC, *Pets* GZ, *Knots* UKWT. Readability—Formula Rating, *Cooking* 10.4, *Camping* 13.5, *Pets* 12.3, *Knots* 13.5. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

This is a very well illustrated series of books in which each title deals with one subject. Their standard of presentation is high although the readability levels could present difficulties. They are good value for money and should find a place in most schools' reference libraries. Contents lists and indexes make for ease of reference during topic work.

77-174 MARKS, S. and ELLIS, R. *Ketut Lives in Bali.* Methuen. 1977. £1.75p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 919.2. Bliss KXD. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.9. Teacher Rating, 10.0+. Interest Age Range, 8—12.

An interesting, clearly outlined description of a typical "Balinese" family. The photographs and style of presentation make it most helpful for project work with upper juniors. It is an expensive book and considering its limited use in this area, might not be frequently purchased. It seems a pity that it carries neither a contents list nor an index.

77-175 YOUNG, G. *The First Watch Book of Discovery: Houses & Gardens.* Carousel (Transworld). 1976. £0.45p. 94 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 790. Bliss HL. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.5. Teacher Rating, 11+. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

This book is produced under the auspices of "Watch—", a club sponsored by The Sunday Times whose aims are to promote an awareness of the environment and its conservation in young people. This particular book directs attention to the child's home and garden, e.g. how to use up waste material. It deals with the topics in a well structured way using drawings and illustrations to supplement and explain important features. It will be of most use to fluent junior children who are following such themes either in school or at home. It seems a pity that the presentation was not made more attractive.

See also Review Numbers 77-87, 89, 233, 237, 241, 245, 247, 248, 250, 252, 253, 254, 257, 262, 263, 265, 266, 267, 269, 273.

Books for Secondary Schools

Reading and Language Development

77-176 BAMMAN, H.A. and WHITEHEAD, R.J. *The Top Flight Readers.* (3 titles). Addison-Wesley. 1977. 90 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Chopper* 7.6, *Barnstormers* 8.4, *Bush Pilot* 8.11. Teacher Rating, 7½—8½. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

These three books concern the adventures of professional pilots who tangle with law breakers. In "Chopper" a helicopter pilot and news photographer foil the attempts of a gang to appropriate hidden gold. "Bush Pilot" is set in Alaska and tells of an attempt to rob an old man of his furs and the "Barnstormers" are two stunt pilots who frustrate an act of sabotage.

The books are well bound and the print is clear. The monochrome double page illustrations red, yellow or green according to the book, are excellent and perhaps more dramatic than the stories, which are restricted in impact due to the stilted language. Each book has an appended vocabulary list and twenty three out of a total of ninety pages are taken up with rather uninspired questions on the text.

77—177 HARDCASTLE, M. *Collins Contact 1—8.* Collins. 1976. 32 pages each. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0—9.4. Teacher Rating, 7½—9. Interest Age Range, Books 1—4, 11—14; Books 5—8, 14—16.

Books 1—4 of this set of books for slow readers in the Secondary School describes four realistic episodes in the life of Jimmy Carey a young city boy who is about 13 years old. Michael Hardcastle conveys real life conversations and situations within the confines of a reading age of approximately 8. Jimmy is threatened and intimidated by school bullies, involved in trouble with rival fans at a football match, finally gets the bike he has been longing for and enters a road race. The books are well presented with large, bold print and excellent black and white line drawings.

The remaining four books have the same format but tell the story of Jimmy's older brother, Alan. In the first book, he plays for the local football team but is injured and subsequently unemployed for a while. He then has successive jobs as a Security Guard and a paratrooper and acquires a girl

friend. These books should be a valuable asset for any teacher involved with older slow-learning pupils.

77-178 JACKSON, A. *Spirals Series.* (6 titles). Hutchinson. 1976. £0.30p. each. 21—48 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Dreams* 6.0, *The Austin Seven* 8.0, *Bennet Manor* 7.0, *The Actor* 6.0, *The Ear* 7.0, *The Game of Life or Death* 7.0. Teacher Rating, 7—8. Interest Age Range, 14 to adult.

This series is splendid value for money. Each story is exciting, dramatic and mysterious and will make compelling material for many poor readers at the secondary or even adult stage. The writing style is simple with short sentences and non-technical vocabulary but despite the low reading level, the language does not appear to be stilted. A recommended purchase for secondary slow learners.

77-179 GRADY, L.E. and WILCOCKSON, D.P. *Creative Writing in Practice.* Blackie. 1976. £0.85p. 47 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0. Teacher Rating, 12.0. Interest Age Range, 11—13.

A wide variety of themes is presented within this book, e.g. the sea, the machine age and illustrating each theme are several imaginative prose or poem selections ranging from the well-known, e.g. Monsarrat's *The Cruel Sea* to compositions from the authors' pupils. Each theme ends with questions and suggestions for the planning of follow-up work. The themes are well worked out but the teacher will still have much to do to ensure independent pupil writing which will integrate their own experience and ideas into the themes. The book is well presented in a reasonably substantial binding.

77-180 LOW, O. *First Certificate in English Practice and First Certificate in English Practice — Key.* Edward Arnold. £1.50p. and £0.80p. (Key). 113 pages and 28 (Key). Readability—Formula Rating, 14.0—15.2. Teacher, Rating 15+. Interest Age Range, 16+.

This book of English exercises with accompanying answer key has been

written as a supplement to the author's First Certificate in English Course. The work covers five areas; written composition, reading comprehension, use of English, listening comprehension and oral expression. The exercises are based on working towards the First Certificate in English examination. The print is oversmall making reading tiring but the book covers its intended area comprehensively.

77-181 MADGWICK, M. and MCCULLA, N. *Crossroads*. Edward Arnold. 1976. £2.25p. 159 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12—14.6. Teacher Rating, 11—15. Interest Age Range, 12—15.

"Crossroads" presents a creative English course embracing a wide variety of topics, e.g. T.V., country life, pollution and conservation. There are 28 units each containing extracts of prose and verse and followed by comments, questions and suggestions for further related work and reading. The extracts are well chosen and the follow-up material seems unobtrusive. The best level of success however, will be obtained by an enterprising teacher using the text with above average children in the upper half of the secondary school. The book is well presented in durable limp covers.

77-182 MENZIES, D. *Flannan Isle File*. Blackie. 1977. £5.0. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0—14.8. Teacher Rating, 11—14+. Interest Age Range, 12—13.

A pack of resource material built around the poem Flannan Isle. It promotes a study of drama and atmosphere by having gathered together documents and newspaper extracts contemporary to the writing of the poem. The pack could be used as enrichment material or built into a much wider study by use of the teacher's notes. The idea is a welcome one but the execution of it loses a little in lack of care concerning the readability levels of the material. Most are more difficult than the poem itself and the range is very wide.

77-183 JACKSON, S. *Oxford Senior Worksheets, 1*. Oxford University Press. 1977. £6.95p. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0—8.0. Teacher Rating, 6.5—8.0. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

A set of prepared spirit masters of worksheets. Eight are devoted to simple

phonic skills, e.g. 'ee' and 'oo' and common consonant digraphs and the remainder are exercises and puzzles which stress reading for meaning though mainly at the literal level. The responses required vary from the individual letter to the writing of a short sentence. If work with them is carefully monitored they should prove a boon to the busy remedial teacher in the secondary school. The layout and reproduction quality is good.

77-184 THOMPSON, B. (Ed). *Discoveries*. (4 titles). Longman. 1976. £0.90p. each. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Paint in the Sky* 10.10, *Giant Steps* 10.10, *Don't Read This* 12.0, *Born Wild* 11.2. Teacher Rating, 10.14. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

A welcome and excellent collection of stories, poems and cartoons grouped into themes. The books have been adapted from American material but the content should be very interesting to British children. Skilful use has been made of different type faces and the full range of illustrative devices. They are lively and exciting and provide a wealth of source material for expanding knowledge and reading skills together. The author does not give guidelines for work relating to the books but teachers will readily see a wide variety of possibilities. At such a low price for such an expensive production they must be rated a very good buy.

77-185 WALKER, D. *Next Stage: 13 Plays for Written or Improvised Extension*. Edward Arnold. 1977. £0.75p. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.11. Teacher Rating, 7.5—9.0. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

Thirteen short plays are presented in this book, some will take only 15 minutes to act, others a little longer. They all concentrate on everyday experiences, e.g. in a launderette, or football and present open-ended situations which can be developed further if required. The book is a good starter for classroom drama work, particularly with older junior and secondary pupils.

See also Review Numbers 77-90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 97, 98, 298.

77-186 ALLEN, J. *The Spring on the Mountain.* Puffin. 1977. £0.45p. 144 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.9. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10. Interest Age Range, 10—13.

Three young people take a holiday with Mr & Mrs Myer. They do not know each other and are embarassed and bored. Gradually through a number of strange and magical encounters friendships are made. The modern setting of this fairy tale is imaginative and should be enjoyed by many children. It is however, by its print size, scarcity of illustrations and length, a book for the fluent and keen reader.

77-187 BAKER, M.J. *Sand In Our Shoes.* Methuen. 1976. £2.50. 127 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.0. Teacher Rating, 11.0. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

A very readable book concerning the Ridley family who buy a cheap secondhand caravan by the sea. The family have adventures, many near disasters and make a number of good friends. The story is told through a flowing type of dialogue which aids the reader. It is printed with a clear type face on good quality paper and has a stout hard cover binding. Even so, with only a few small illustrations it seems rather expensive.

77-188 BANKS, R.A. *Ten Science Fiction Stories.* Hodder & Stoughton. 1977. £1.20p. 156 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.7. Teacher Rating, 13—14. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

This book hides behind an unattractive cover and an unillustrated interior ten of the best science fiction short stories ever collected into one volume. They range from Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* to Fast's *The Large Ant.* As is almost inevitable in an anthology the readability level varies somewhat from story to story but even a reader at the lower end of the scale and particularly boys will find it difficult to put down once they start to read it.

77-189 BANKS, L.R. *The L-Shaped Room.* Longman. 1976. 309 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.5. Teacher Rating, 10.5—12. Interest Age Range, 12—16.

An imprint edition of this well known story of life in bed-sitter land. Jane is shown as she struggles to grow in independence and self respect—the room being symbolic in that it mirrors Jane's state of mind. The book includes some excellent photographs and helpful points for follow up discussion. It is for the older secondary child and perhaps unfortunately is more likely to be found in the hands of girls rather than boys.

77-190 BARSTOW, S. *Joby.* Blackie. 1977. £1.60. 86 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.4. Teacher Rating, 9—10.5. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

This is the dramatisation of Stan Barstow's novel *Joby,* its setting is a small pre-war Yorkshire town and its theme that of a young boy "growing up" and the complex issues this poses. There are excellent character studies of Joby and his parents which are well supported by good photographs. At the end of the play are extracts from the original novel, plus helpful discussion questions. The content of this play will ideally suit the older secondary pupil posing many opportunities for the discussion of human relationships.

77-191 BERNA, P. *The Mystery of the Cross-Eyed Man.* Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 171 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0—13.0. Teacher Rating, 10.5—12. Interest Age Range, 11—14.

Daniel and his young brother were to meet their parents in Paris and then travel on for a family reunion with their grandfather. Their parents are delayed and the boys decide to continue the journey on their own. They feel they are being followed by the police through a number of adventures later to find that they are being mistaken for the runaway sons of a wealthy American. Though adequate the story never reaches exciting proportions and is unlikely to be enthused over by secondary school boys for whom it would seem intended.

77-192 B.B. *The Little Grey Men Go Down The Bright Stream.* Methuen. 1977. £0.75p. 256 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.5. Teacher Rating, 11+—12+. Interest Age Range, 10—12.

When Folly Brook dries up, the very last four gnomes in Britain have to leave their home, by the stream, and search for a new safe place. The reader follows their adventures along with those of their friends a family of owls with Irish accents. The story is bright and imaginative although its literary style and long descriptive passages do make for a high readability level. Nevertheless, the adventures should promote enthusiastic reading by pupils as well as teachers.

77-193 BROWN, G.M. *Greenvoe.* Longman. 1977. £0.95p. 272 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.5. Teacher Rating, 12.5—14. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

The setting is Greenvoe, a village in the Orkney Islands and the story describes the lives of the Island's inhabitants. Excellent character studies are developed. Superficially the theme is one of the change and destruction that is brought about by technology but more basically it is concerned with the ritual, ceremony and rigorous commitment of the inhabitants. This book is essentially for mature fluent older pupils who with a teacher's direction, should be able to understand and appreciate the theme, others may find many of the historic references and concepts difficult to understand.

77-194 BYARS, B. *The House of Wings.* Puffin. 1977. £0.45p. 110 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.7. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

The story of a relationship between Sammy and his grandfather. The two are thrown together in a truck travelling to Detroit after the boy's parents disappear. Out of initial antagonism a trusting and affectionate relationship grows. The story, whilst sensitively exploring the emotions of an abandoned child, may possibly be upsetting to some children. It is easy to read at the age at which children will find it interesting but could equally well be read aloud to children if care is taken in the selection of the audience.

77-195 BURNHAM, J. and RAY, T. *Children of the Stones*. Transworld (Carousel). 1977. £0.50p. 189 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.6. Teacher Rating, 9.5—11.5. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

This is an intriguing story as intriguing as its title. Around a village are 53 stones, living in the village are 53 people yet they are affected by mysterious powers from the past. The church is locked, there is no priest or vicar. It is into this situation that Mathew and his father, an astrophysicist come. They become involved with the circle of stones and their powers, their adventures and suspicions lead to an equally intriguing ending. This is an enjoyable story that will be much in demand. There are, however, some occasional sophisticated turns of phrase which will need explanation.

77-196 CARR, R.V. *Debbie's Guy*. Cassell. 1976. £0.70p. 114 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.11. Teacher Rating, 9—9.5. Interest Age Range, 12—15.

This story will appeal to many adolescent girls who will identify with the girl, Debbie, and the situations which describe her growing friendship with a boy. This gradual friendship is described in detail using a flowing readable style with simple sentence structure making the story easy to read, but perhaps lacking in depth. The vocabulary used is colloquial. The book could be used for private reading, possibly as a first novel for readers in their early teens who have reading problems or as a source for discussion with a group or class. The presentation is clear, featuring occasional full page black and white illustrations.

77-197 CARTER, B. *The Deadly Freeze*. J.M. Dent. 1976. £2.75p. 128 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 15.5. Teacher Rating, 14—18. Interest Age Range, 14—16.

This is an intriguing story of the unusual blackmail technique used by the ruthless dictator of Karenia in his effort to increase his military power. The teenage heroes, Humph and Charles become involved and succeed in finding the cause and the cure of the "deadly freeze", a lethal paralysis that threatens to wipe out the populations of the major European cities. The story will be suitable library material for older secondary fluent readers and of interest mainly to boys.

77-198 CARTER, B. *Buzzbugs*. J.M. Dent. 1977. £2.95. 119 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.0. Teacher Rating, 13—14. Interest Age Range, 11—14.

Buzzbugs tells the story of two twelve year old children who see their peaceful Lakeland Valley invaded by great flying insects, which prey on animals and humans alike and while entomologists search for a solution the plague spreads. It is a gripping story with a moving narrative and developed by means of a fairly advanced vocabulary. The book should appeal to both sexes, has a clear presentation but no illustrations and a substantial binding.

77-199 CATHERALL, A. *Twelve Minutes to Disaster*. J.M. Dent. 1977. £2.95p. 123 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.5. Teacher Rating, 12.0—13.0. Interest Age Range, 13—15.

A collection of seven traditional type stories in which each of the main characters faces isolated confrontation against the elements or other individuals. The situations depicted would however be regarded as archaic by children aware of contemporary technological advances and innovations. Some of the vocabulary and figurative language is demanding as is the complex sentence structure, the result being that the reading level is high in relation to the interest level. Purchased as a library copy it may appeal to boys who are fluent readers with wide interests in different environments.

77-200 COOPER, S. *Grenwitch*. Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 153 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.9. Teacher Rating, 11—13. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

This is an imaginative adventurous story which would appeal to children 10—14 years, especially girls. Simon, Jane and Barrabas are identifiable characters and the village of Trevirrick is realistic—both facts would give readers security when faced with the quest for the golden chalice. Pupil's will enjoy the excitement of the struggle between Light and Dark and magical realms of the Greenwitch. It is a good story to read aloud to children and could lead to interesting discussions on witchcraft and power of good and evil.

77-201 COPE, K. *Striker Second Leg*. BBC. 1977. £2.05p. (60p. paper). 97 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.5. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

The book of the Television Series about the Brenton Boys' Football Club provides a good, fast moving story of the "behind scenes" drama involving the young footballers as it traces the apparent jinx on their club. The writing style of concise sentence structure and colloquial dialogue is appropriate to the content which includes descriptions of action on the pitch and several references to Goodison Park, Everton and Dixie Dean. The paper back is good value for money and the story should be enjoyed by all football enthusiasts between 10—15 years.

77-202 DICKENS, M. *Talking To Horses*. Pan. 1977. £0.55p. 140 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 798. Bliss HLT. Readability—Formula Rating, 13. Teacher Rating, 12—13. Interest Age Range, 9—16.

Written in an easy narrative style, this book recounts the author's interesting encounters with friends and their horses, as well as her own riding experiences. Amongst the anecdotes are many helpful hints, about management, stabling and technique. It will appeal to all those who are involved with horses.

77-203 *Bulls Eye Series*. (4 titles). Hutchinson. 1977. £0.65p. 123—127 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Goldfinger* 7.6, *The Quest of Julian Day* 9.4, *The Man with the Golden Gun* 7.6, *Murder, London—New York* 12.0. Teacher Rating, 7—9. Interest Age Range, 10—16.

These four books are all murder mysteries which will appeal predominantly to 14+ adolescents. They are competently written but possess no illustration. The readability levels amongst the four books do vary considerably so they will need cautious allocation to readers.

77-204 GLANVILLE, B. *A Bad Lot & Other Stories*. Penguin. 1977. £0.50p. 144 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.2. Teacher Rating, 12—13.5. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

The ten stories contained in this book centre around football and boxing. They give insights into the life that exists behind the scenes—bribery, the press, discipline as well as the physical fitness required for the game. As the book says "The stories are of a highly individual world" and ring with authenticity. Fluent secondary readers will most appreciate them.

77-205 GROVES, P. and GRIMSHAW, N. *13 Ghosts.* Edward Arnold. 1976. 90 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.8. Teacher Rating, 9—10.5. Interest Age Range, 11—13.

This could be treated as a book of comprehension exercises but it is included instead in this section for these thirteen ghost stories are intriguing, thought-provoking and well-written. The book provides considerable opportunities for discussion and written exercises along lines suggested by the authors.

77-206 GROVES, P. and GRIMSHAW, N. *Action Stations.* Edward Arnold. 1977. £0.75p. 64 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 6.7. Teacher Rating, 6.5—8. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

Material for drama with suggestions for the teacher. Seven playlets written in an easy style at a low reading level and covering a good variety of situations. It would appear a very useful book with few competitors at such a low reading level.

77-207 HEWETT, P. *A Further Choice of Poets.* Harrap. 1976. £2.95p. 348 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, Teacher Rating, 10—16+. Interest Age Range, 14—16+.

This anthology of poems represents the work of fourteen lesser known poets. Each section is preceded by an introduction and followed by informative notes. The book could be useful as a class book for 14—16 years olds, fluent readers, but it would also have much relevence for sixth form college students. The presentation of the book is good—it is well set out with clear print and is good value for money.

77-208 HUXLEY, A. *Brave New World.* Longman. 1976. 226 pages.

Readability—Formula Rating, Teacher Rating, Interest Age Range,15—adult.

An established book which tries to look ahead to the distant future of mankind in an inventive and insightful manner. Whether the adolescent will be able to recognise the deeper implications of the book is doubtful but that will not prevent the enjoyment of the story.

77-209 IBBOTSON, E. *The Great Ghost Rescue.* Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 125 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.0. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

A family of ghosts are forced to vacate their home since it is to be turned into a holiday camp. One of the ghosts makes friends with a boy and they plan to find a ghost sanctuary but have opposition from exorcists. An interesting and human story with good characterisation and some comment on the shortcomings of the human race. The story should appeal to both boys and girls and could be read to children who have not yet attained the reading level necessary to read it for themselves.

77-210 JAMES, D.L. *Eight American Stories.* Longman. 1977. £1.10p. 186 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.5. Teacher Rating, 11—12.5. Interest Age Range, 11—14.

The eight American stories within this book are good examples of poignant, sensitive and insightful literature. Each depicts a different aspect of American life in which the hero through his experiences and adventures becomes more mature, more questioning or more puzzled. Before each story commences, there is a helpful precis and valuable questions regarding the implications of the story. This will be an excellent book that could be used to develop much thematic work in subject areas. The excellent black and white photographs, superbly illustrate the text and will themselves promote much discussion.

77-211 JEFFERIS, B. *First Flight.* Cassell. 1976. £0.70p. 95 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.11. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range,10—13.

The theme of this very exciting book, which takes place in Australia, is the first flight of a girl who is frightened of planes. The plane takes off accidentally and Janet finds herself in mid-air, completely alone. She lands safely, however, after being talked down by the young man she loves. There are some unfamiliar Australian words and expressions and rather a lot of technical descriptions but this should not deter young readers. Although books about planes are usually more interesting to boys the fact that a girl is the central character should give it an appeal to girls also.

77-212 JONES, D.W. *The Ogre Downstairs*. Puffin. 1977. £0.55p. 189 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.0. Teacher Rating, 10—12.5. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

A fast moving story of three children and their amazing adventures with a chemistry set. The set was given to them by their step-father, the Ogre, but the chemicals inside appear to have unusual and magical qualities. It is an hilarious book, full of funny events which will be popular with children of nine to fourteen.

77-213 LEACH, C. *Searching for Skylights*. J.M. Dent. 1977. £2.95. 122 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.5. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 15—18.

Set in London this story tells of a young man who cannot settle to one steady job. The story ends rather optimistically with David having made the break from home and beginning work for an art dealer but having realised that his attitude to the job is more important than the type of job. The story line is not strong but the atmosphere, character studies and interplay of relationships are well drawn. The book is good reading for a thoughtful adolescent.

77-214 LEE, L. *Cider with Rosie*. Longman. 1976. 247 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.0. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.5. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

A classic in its time, this beautifully told tale describes the life of a young teenage boy as he grows up in a Cotswold village. The setting is that of the

1920s, "a much quieter world" and the story develops around adolescence and approaching manhood. This is illustrated in his teenage relationship with Rosie, it is an excellent tale with many vivid descriptions of the life that existed fifty years ago. With such a story as this there is always the possibility that it will be of more value to the teacher than the pupil who may only appreciate it at a later date when his/her childhood and adolescence are memories.

77-215 LESLIE, S. *Tracker Books.* (Skyjacked, Codebreaker, Action Football). Trnasworld. 1976, 77. £0.45p. 40 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.6—11.0. Teacher Rating, 8—11. Interest Age Range, 10—15.

The three books explore well used themes but the method of narration and presentation is unusual. The reader is expected to make decisions and the story develops according to the decision made, e.g. on page 2 of Skyjacked we read, "Should I try to escape and get help?"—Depending on the answer the reader moves to either page 6 or page 4 but not to page 3. The stories can thus be read in a number of ways and may have to be read a number of times before a satisfactory conclusion is reached. The bright child could be fascinated by the approach and it gives lots of opportunity for interaction within a group. The idea is somewhat better than the quality of writing and in Action Football the commentary style is not very convincing. Children using the books should ideally be reading at a level above that suggested by the readability ratings.

77-216 LESTER, J. *Basketball Game.* Penguin. 1977. £0.50p. 92 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.9. Teacher Rating, 10.5—11.5. Interest Age Range, 11—13.

American in terms of spellings, situation and expressions, not to mention swear words, this book deals with a race relations situation in Nashville, Tennessee. It tells the story of a black youth and the development of his feelings for a white girl. Teenage children will feel sympathy with this description of growth towards adulthood but some teachers may feel that the language and explicit sexual descriptions go too far.

77-217 MASEFIELD, J. *The Midnight Folk.* Pan. 1976. £0.60p. 237 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.4. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

A beautiful story of a boy who is introduced to a magical world of mystery and excitement by some of his old toys. The quality of writing and the usage of vocabulary provides very good training in the sensitive use of language. Many children will have to struggle a little to get through the first few pages which from a reading point of view are the most difficult in the book. They could also be put off by a lack of familiarity with the learning of Latin.

77-218 NAUGHTON, B. *My Pal Spadger.* J.M. Dent. 1977. £2.95p. 130 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 15.0. Teacher Rating, 13.5—14.5. Interest Age Range, 14—15.

This moving and poignant story of friendship between two boys is set vividly in Bolton during the 1920s. The story is told with warmth, understanding and humour and seen through the eyes of a boy called Bill. He tells about his life style, his pals and his special friend, Spadger. An excellent book for any secondary school library.

77-219 NAUGHTON, B. *A Dog called Nelson.* J.M. Dent. 1976. £2.75. 125 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.0. Teacher Rating, 14. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

This is a humorous tale which is very well written. It is a real life story centred around a one-eyed mongrel Nelson, and his importance to every member of the family living at the end of the street. The story is developed using a simple but lively language and is accompanied by good black and white illustrations. It will become a valuable book for the teacher to tell as a class story or as leisure time reading for secondary pupils.

77-220 PALMER, G. and LLOYD, N. *Stories of Robin Hood.* Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 159 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0. Teacher Rating, 13+. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

This well known folk hero and his adventures will provide much enjoyment

for upper junior and early secondary pupils. However, the long sentences and literary style used could limit its use to the competent fluent reader.

77-221 PEYTON, K.M. *The Edge of the Cloud.* Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 192 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.9. Teacher Rating, 12. Interest Age Range, 12—16.

A most delightful book set in the period immediately prior to the first World War. Christina in love with her cousin, Will, has to face the reality that although he returns her love, his overwhelming passion is for making and flying aeroplanes. Through the course of the book she grows from a girl into a woman, ready to take her place beside Will as his wife. This is a book more for girls than boys and being set in a slower moving historical period, it will have a different appeal from that of many of today's more modern novels.

77-222 RODGERS, M. *Freaky Friday.* Puffin. 1977. £0.45p. 154 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.6. Teacher Rating, 11—12. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

Mary Rodger's book looks at the eternal problem of understanding another generation. Her thirteen year old heroine wakes up one morning to discover that she has changed into her own mother and the account of how she copes with the day's difficulties is fast-moving and amusing. It is a good theme which has been made into a film by Walt Disney Productions and should appeal to girls. The situations, activities and vocabulary are American which could perhaps lessen the impact of the story on British children.

77-223 SALINGER, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye.* Penguin. 1977. £0.60p. 220 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 17.4. Teacher Rating, 16. Interest Age Range, 15—adult.

A contemporary American classic, this book is a sensitive portrayal of an alienated rich adolescent looking at his family, his schooling and the life around him. It is written in strong language and the British adolescent might find some of the references to American life and customs a little difficult to understand.

77-224 SCHOUTEN, A. *The Sea Lord.* Methuen. 1977. £2.95p. 140 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.9. Teacher Rating, 11.5—13. Interest Age Range, 12—16.

This is a vividly written story set in two parts. Initially it describes a small primitive tribe that lived in the Dark Ages. Their life is harsh, bleak and threatened by the hazards of the sea and weather. Eventually the sea destroys this community—that is all but the young fair haired child, Gram. In the second part of the story the year is 1000 A.D. and the scene the same mudflats and sea village. As though from the sea, a young man arrives almost as a magical vision, tall and mysterious. The title "Sea Lord" is attached to him as well as Mermen, but it is the superstition of old myths of Gram and the stranger's identity which make this second and final section of the book very good reading. The illustrations are excellent as is the legibility and format of the text.

77-225 SILLITOE, A. *Saturday Night & Sunday Morning.* Longman. 1976. £1.10p. 242 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.4. Teacher Rating, 10—12. Interest Age Range, 13—18.

An imprint edition of this story brought to the notice of many by the film version of it, is illustrated by stills from the film and has extensive notes and suggestions for discussion. The use of a good deal of direct speech gives the book its atmosphere and keeps the reading level fairly low. The language used and some of the situations may worry some teachers but the book gives excellent opportunities for discussing real-life issues.

77-226 TOWNSEND, J.R. *The Intruder.* Penguin. 1977. £0.60p. 189 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.7. Teacher Rating, 10—12. Interest Age Range, 12—16.

In this story a sixteen year old boy is faced with the emotional problem and physical danger of establishing who he is. A stranger in the village causes this problem by claiming Arnold's name and identity. It is an intriguing story set against the background of the sea and sand and should appeal to older pupils in the secondary school.

77-227 VERNE, J. (BARLING, T. retold). *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.* Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 125 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.5. Teacher Rating, 10—11+. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

This classic story by Jules Verne of Captain Nemo and his submarine Nautilus, has been retold for younger children. The publishers suggest that the 8—14 year old reader will enjoy this book, however, it appears more suitable for the fluent ten year old child. The complex sentence patterns and difficult story development make it too difficult for the younger child.

77-228 WALTERS, H. *Boy Astronaut.* Abelard-Schuman. 1977. £0.50p. 61 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.3. Teacher Rating, 10.6—11.6 years. Interest Age Range, 10—13.

The hatch between the Lunar and the Command Module jams and unless it can be opened the crew face death from lack of oxygen or from incineration on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. Peter, chosen as the first Boy Astronaut is a member of this crew, and with them helps to release the hatch. The story is cleverly narrated with helpful illustrations and should give pleasurable reading particularly to boys.

77-229 WILLARD, B. *Harrow & Harvest.* Puffin. 1977. £0.55p. 203 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.9—14.4. Teacher Rating, 12—13.5. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

This is a historical novel set in the Civil War period and is the final story of the 'Mantlemass' series. The tale revolves around Nicholas and Cecilia Medley, who live at Mantlemass. It is a rather romantic as well as tragic and eventful story that helps reveal much about the social setting of the period. Intertwined is the story of two brothers, Edmond and Harry, and the final return to claim an inheritance. Although a good leisure time story, it is more easily understood if the previous books in the series have been read.

77-230 WILLARD, B. *A Cold Wind Blowing.* Puffin. 1977. £0.50p. 178 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.0. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

This is the third novel of the Mantlemass Chronicles, in which the author displays a great depth of understanding in her account of a Sussex family's experiences during the period of Henry VIIIs dissolution of the monasteries. The story is well written with many beautifully detailed descriptive passages. It should appeal to girls who are competent readers with mature attitudes. Footnotes explaining the historical terms used would have been helpful.

77-231 WYNDHAM, J. *The Seeds of Time.* Wheaton. 1976. £1.05p. 155 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.6. Teacher Rating, 12.5—14. Interest Age Range, 13—16.

This book is a collection of ten science fiction stories. They are, as the author states, experiments in adapting the sci-fi motif to various styles of short story. Their content varies from adventure narrative, through comedy-romantic to modern short story and should be most suited to competent readers in the middle and older secondary ages. However, the different styles of narration used do effect the readability and make it necessary to include discussion and strong teacher involvement.

See also Review Numbers 77-101, 102, 104, 109, 116, 120, 123, 124, 125, 126, 129, 130, 134, 138, 148, 155, 158, 160, 165.

Non-Fiction

77-232 ALDRIDGE, P.R. and J.P. *Building Jerusalem.* Blackie. 1976. £1.15p. 88 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.1. Teacher Rating, 15+. Interest Age Range, 13—18.

In this book is a miscellany of song, prose, illustration and poetry depicting social life and domestic scenes from 1750—1850. They are intended to portray the liberalisation of British Society brought about the Industrial revolution. Authenticity is maintained by the use of eye-witness accounts. Perhaps a little political prejudice shows through the caricatures of Georgian opulence. Readability is somewhat varied owing to the use of extracts and therefore the book is only suited to the good reader in the upper secondary school.

77-233 ALEXANDER, R. *Furry Pets of Your Own.* Carousel (Transworld). 1976. £0.40p. 61 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 636. Bliss GZ. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.0. Teacher Rating, 13—14. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

This is one of the most interesting as well as informative books on Pet Care. It deals with seven different animals and gives amusing anecdotes along with an outline of the attention required e.g. Guinea Pigs have eleven different styles of squeaks—one can mean "Hello, how nice to see you". another "My word, I'm ready for supper". It is much more fun to read than the straight statement of facts.

77-234 BALLANTINE, R. *The Piccolo Bicycle Book.* Pan. 1977. £0.60p. 190 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 796.6. Bliss HLQ. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.0. Teacher Rating, 16+. Interest Age Range, 11 to adult.

A complete reference book covering buying, riding, racing, maintenance etc. Its comprehensive nature, however, leads to some difficulties for there is a great deal of technical terminology. However, for the boy who wants to find out, reading difficulties may well be overcome. The print is rather small but the diagrams and line drawings are excellent.

77-235 BASTABLE, T. *A Dictionary of Dinosaurs.* Pan. 1977. £0.60p. 121 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 16.0. Teacher Rating, 16—17+. Interest Age Range, 11+—14.

A very extensive alphabetically arranged dictionary of dinosaurs giving precise descriptions of each and setting them in their time and geographic situations. As a reference book, it will be useful for topic work but a pronouncing guide and more summary and comparison tables would have been helpful. Could probably be used effectively by children with lower reading age levels than suggested above.

77-236 BUTLER, W.V. *The Greatest Magicians on Earth.* Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 122 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.0. Teacher Rating, 13+. Interest Age Range, 13—16.

The unusual magician is the theme of this book, each chapter dealing with one Master in his historical setting, e.g. The Thought Transferrors, The Rebel in a Robot and the Marvellous Merchiston. It is a highly readable book but more suitable for older secondary pupils.

77-237 CARRICK, M. *Science Experiments.* Carousel (Transworld). 1977. £0.45p. 64 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 500, Bliss AZ. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.11. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

If you want to make a boiled egg disappear into a bottle, or make a form of plastic from milk with vinegar and no-one minds, then this is an excellent book. Many experiments are suggested involving optical illustion, centrifugal force, static electricity and many more. They are presented in a comic type format which can sometimes be difficult to follow, especially when the pages are not numbered. It is, however, an intriguing and interesting book that could promote much more interest in such problems.

77-238 CLARK, J.O.E. *Everyday Technology — Computers.* J.M. Dent. 1976. £2.50. 64 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 510.78, 621.38, 658. Bliss AMU. Readability—Formula Rating, 17.0. Teacher Rating, 16—17. Interest Age Range, 13+.

A comprehensive book dealing with the types, terminology, uses, history and technology of computers. It should appeal to curious students with a mathematical and technical interest. There are clear diagrams, flow charts and adequate photographs supplement the somewhat complex text. Well produced in a durable binding.

77-239 DARLINGTON, A. *Experiments with your Microscope.* Carousel (Transworld). 1977. £0.45p. 112 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 570. Bliss DW. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.2. Teacher Rating, 12.5+. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

This is a specialist book that should accompany or be found with microscopes. It could be useful to the enthusiast at home as well as a supplementary book to use at school. It narrates and illustrates many

experiments but as can be expected, it has quite a complex vocabulary. The book will appeal to many children who have access to a microscope and will guide their usage and appreciation of this instrument.

77-240 ELLIS, A. *The Magpie History of Food.* Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 190 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.5. Teacher Rating, 13—14. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

A history of cooking and eating from Ancient Britain to World War II. The title is a little misleading for the treatment of food is set against the social history and customs of the age. It is a pity that such a well-researched book giving such a mass of information does not have an index. Line illustrations are good but the content justifies the use of illustration more frequently.

77-241 FIRMIN, J. *Garden Birds* (Wonder Why Book). Carousel (Transworld). £0.50p. 29 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.5. Teacher Rating, 9—11. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

Each page describes the appearance, habits, geographical distribution and eggs of one bird. A very good coloured illustration of each bird is provided. A valuable book at a very reasonable price but a much more extensive index would have improved it.

77-242 GARRETT, R. *They Must Have Been Crazy.* Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 143 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 001. Bliss I. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.8. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

An A—Z of eccentricity which few people will be able to resist. Many of the incidents which are reported are very funny ranging from the lost property of a Russian Grand Duchess to the story of a fur lined car. If schools don't buy it, it will certainly sell in the book shops.

77-243 GEORGANO, N. *Motor Cars.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.45p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 388, 629.2. Bliss TNM, UFN. Readability—Formula Rating, 15.9. Teacher Rating, 13.0. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

A history of the motor car with sections on car oddities, how the engine works and racing. Reading is helped along by good illustrations, a glossary and an index. A good book for topic work.

77-244 GOOD HOUSEKEEPING. *Cooking is Fun.* Ebury Press. 1976. 256 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 641. Bliss UXL. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0—11.8. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 13—adult.

This is an excellent well planned book. It deals with complete meals that are nutritionally valuable and well planned. Each meal of the day is indexed with an easy to follow colour coding and the cookery states are well documented by using photographs. The book is entirely metric and fully justifies its title "Cooking is Fun".

77-245 GOOD HOUSEKEEPING. *Children's Cook Book.* Ebury Press. 1976. £2.50p. 127 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 641. Bliss UXL. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.0. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

A helpful and realistic introduction to cooking. It is well laid out and apart from full colour illustrations of complete dishes, there are step by step instructions in the form of black and white photographs.

77-246 GREENBANK, A. *Climbing for Young People.* Pan. 1977. £0.60p. 127 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 796.5. Bliss HLO. Readability—Formula Rating, 16.7. Teacher Rating, 11—12½. Interest Age Range, 11—15.

An introduction to rock and snow climbing for children, containing sections on equipment, clothing, route planning, techniques and suggestions for practising at home. The black and white illustrations are, on the whole, clear and informative. Much emphasis is placed on safety precautions and references given for further reading. It is highly pertinent to the beginning climber in the 11—14 year age group. The book is very readable, the author's enthusiasm for his subject being conveyed in his writing style.

77-247 GUNDREY, E. *Joining Things*. Pan. 1977. £0.45p. 96 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 790. Bliss HK, HL, VY. Readability—Formula Rating, 17.9. Teacher Rating, 15+. Interest Age Range, 5 to adult.

In this book can be found every conceivable club that young people can join, e.g. Pirate Club, Penfriends and Crusade against Cruelty to Animals Clubs. However, because of its high readability rating, an adult will be needed to help with obtaining information.

77-248 HALEY, G.E. *Costumes for Plays and Playing*. Methuen. 1977. £3.75p. 136 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 792. Bliss YXK. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.6. Teacher Rating, 12+. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

Anyone who is involved with costumes and their preparation will find this book most helpful. It shows how anyone with limited material to hand can improvise any number of costumes, masks and drama equipment. The type face is clear, and the format is well laid out with illustrations which match the directions.

77-249 HAMILTON, R. and INSOLE, A.N. *Finding Fossils*. Penguin. 1977. £0.75p. 160 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 560. Bliss DI, EP. Readability—Formula Rating. 14.7. Teacher Rating, 13—14. Interest Age Range, 13—adult.

A fully comprehensive survey of fossil-collecting and identification makes this attractively presented paperback fascinating reading. It offers a thorough introduction to the subject, includes sensible advice for beginners and gives detailed descriptions of fossil areas throughout Britain. It is well written in a narrative style and is exceptional value for money, being beautifully illustrated with excellent black and white photographic prints, drawings and diagrams.

77-250 HARLAND, S. *Ships*. (How & Wonder Why Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 387, 623. Bliss TNV, UK. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.4. Teacher Rating, 11.0. Interest Age Range, 10—15.

A well illustrated description of ships and boats through the ages with some weighting of space towards more recent developments. A helpful book for topic work.

77-251 HARRIS, N. *Families in History.* (2 titles). J.M. Dent. 1977. £2.75p. 64 pages. Library Classification, Dewey, *The Shaws* 920, 942.08, *The Nelsons* 920, 942.07. Bliss, *The Shaws* L9, MUH, *The Nelsons* L9, MUH. Readability—Formula Rating, 17.0. Teacher Rating, 18.+. Interest Age Range, 16—adult.

Two new titles are added to this recently introduced social history series, The Shaws and The Nelsons being the families of George Bernard Shaw and Horatio Nelson respectively. Narrative writing, which takes as its base the life story and family background of a well known personality, makes for an insightful presentation of the social history of the period. Both books provide detailed fascinating reading although the syntax is frequently complex and the vocabulary demanding. A good clear format is used interspersed with most effective black and white illustrations. A library copy only would be required in order to make available relevant background reading for study purposes at an advanced level.

77-252 HINDE, C. *Prehistoric Mammals.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 32 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 560, 599, 913. Bliss LAD, GY. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.9. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 8—13.

An attractive book covering a good selection of mammals and carefully selecting those facts which most interest children. A good book for topic work.

77-253 HINDE, C. *The First Life on Earth.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 32 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 560, 570. Bliss EO, G. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.9. Teacher Rating, 12.0. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

A most attractive book but the reading level is a little high for most of the children who will be attracted to it. The index is very slight and so reduces its excellence for topic work.

77-254 HOGARTH, E. *Wigwams, Igloos & Bungalows*. Pan. £0.45p. 1977. 93 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 690. Bliss UEN. Readability—Formula Rating, 12.0. Teacher Rating, 11—12. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

A fascinating collection of "homes" forms the theme of this book. Each dwelling is listed alphabetically, well describd and well illustrated by means of black and white drawings. Many of the houses are well known ones, e.g. igloos, lighthouses and huts but others are quite extraordinary, e.g. Hogan and Gojo. Its lack of a contents list or index will limit its use to light factual reading.

77-255 HOPCRAFT, J. *What's Cooking*. J.M. Dent. 1976. £1.95p. 94 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 641. Bliss UXL. Readability—Formula Rating, 16.8. Teacher Rating. 12—13. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

A most attractive book written in a pleasing easy to follow style and illustrated with black and white line drawings. Competent readers girls and boys from the age of 12+ years, should enjoy learning how to cook and plan meals from Jan Hopcraft since she gives clear, uncomplicated instructions plus some very useful hints as to timing and pitfalls of which the beginner needs to be aware.

77-256 KEEN, D.H. and SIMMONS, G.E. *What on Earth are we Doing?*. Ladybird. 1976. £0.24p. 40 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 614. Bliss HI. Readability—Formula Rating, 16.4. Teacher Rating, 12+. Interest Age Range, 11—14.

A neat concise book that considers the problems of conservation and how we all can help if we are to not only save our world but improve it. It is a well written book, presenting enough facts to make it interesting and not boring. Although it has a high readability level, there are short sentences and helpful illustrations.

77-257 LANGFIELD, P. *A Picture Guide to Chess*. J.M. Dent. 1976. £1.95p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 794. Bliss VYT. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.0. Teacher Rating, 13—14. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

A complete guide to the game very clearly set out with illustrative diagrams. A glossary of terms is included but still the reading level is a little high for many of the children who would like to use it.

77-258 LOVE, J. and EDWARDS, C. *Issues*. (2 titles). Harrap. 1977. £0.70p. 27—31 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *Tug of love* 15.5, *Squatters* 16.6. Teacher Rating, 15+—17+. Interest Age Range, 15—adult.

These books are presented as base material for discussion of important social issues. Though in book form each new page looks different as the type face changes to show letters, posters, newspaper articles, case files, maps, etc. The material should be valuable in secondary schools and for adult literacy work.

77-259 LUCAS, A. and D. *Focus on Series*. (2 titles). Methuen. 1977. £1.85p. each. 46 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 500, 600. Bliss AZ. Readability—Formula Rating, *Air* 17.0, *Earth* 15.0. Teacher Rating, 13+. Interest Age Range, 11—14.

These two books, whilst giving facts about their subjects, try to emphasise the inter-relationship of life and the world's resources. For example, the headings in *Focus on Earth* deal with "Trapped energy, Common and rare, The Life Cycle and Treat with Respect", all very valuable perspectives of contemporary problems. It is not possible to agree with the authors that the subjects are dealt with in "simple language". Their format and illustrations are good but their readability level is high.

77-260 MANLEY, D. and REE, P. *The Piccolo Picnic Book*. Pan. 1976. £0.45p. 141 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 796. Bliss HL. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.0. Teacher Rating, 11—12. Interest Age Range, 11—14.

This small book contains a goldmine of information about picnics—where to go, games to play, things to look for and what to eat. It stresses above all, safety and conservation but within these constraints children can learn many new activities. It is a constructive and helpful book that will be of value to those who plan the picnic and take part in it.

77-261 MERRETT, N. *The Deep Sea.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 597, 551. Bliss GV, DRS. Readability—Formula Rating, 15.5. Teacher Rating, 14.0. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

Contains an interesting range of material concerning the sea, its life and fishing but the reading level is high despite the glossary and the index not very detailed. Not as attractive a book as many others in the series.

77-262 MOORE, D. *The Earth.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 32 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 520, 550. Bliss D, DFT. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.1. Teacher Rating, 11—12. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

A worthwhile topic book at the price but there are others on the same subject which give much more information at a lower level of reading difficulty.

77-263 MORRIS, M. *Stories of the Ancient Britons.* Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 143 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 942.01. Bliss MVA. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.9. Teacher Rating, 9.5—10.5. Interest Age Range, 9—14.

The stories in this book are taken from six periods of history in the life of the Ancient Britons. They are fiction but based on researched fact and could well be used with great success to motivate pupils who have little interest in history. The stories are well narrated using main and sub-headings to guide the reader and help him assimilate the information. However, some supporting illustrations would have helped further this point.

77-264 OWEN, E. *Living in Britain Series.* (4 titles). Blackie. 1976. £0.67p. each. 30 pages. Library Classification, Dewey, *Saturday Afternoon* 796, *People Who Care* 360, 610, *On Patrol* 352.2, *Fire is a Killer* 352.3. Bliss, *Saturday Afternoon* HK, *People Who Care* HO, *On Patrol* RPP, *Fire is a Killer* RPN. Readability—Formula Rating, *Saturday Afternoon* 7.5, *People Who Care* 9.0, *On Patrol* 8.5, *Fire is a Killer* 8.0. Teacher Rating, 8—9.6. Interest Age Range, 13 to adult.

Upper secondary pupils as well as adults who are hesitant readers will appreciate this series of stories. They explain the everyday facts about important events, e.g. The Hospital Casualty Department and give insights into their various tasks gruesome though some may be.

77-265 PARSONS, C. and PITMAN, B.D. *Getting to Know About Series.* National Christian Education Council. 1977. 32 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *The Countryside* 13.2, *Farming and Fishing* 15.0. Teacher Rating, 12+—14+. Interest Age Range, 10—14.

A description of the lives and environment of the people who lived in Biblical times. They have sufficient facts to provide good starters for topic work in this area and they give plenty of references to other more detailed material. It seems a pity that the reading difficulty level could not have been pitched a little lower.

77-266 PATERSON, A. *The World of A Tree.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 32 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 582. Bliss FHE. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.4. Teacher Rating, 10—11. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

The content of the book would suggest it was designed for juniors but the reading level is rather high. The index is of limited usefulness.

77-267 PATRICK, B. *Heraldry.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 929. Bliss L8P. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.5. Teacher Rating, 13.0—14.0. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

Strangely for a book on such a colourful subject, this volume is much less attractive than many other titles in the series. There is plenty of information, however, and quite a good index.

77-268 PRATT, O. and I. *Christmas & Easter Ideas Book.* Sheed & Ward. 1977. £1.95p. 72 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 14.0. Teacher Rating, 12.0. Interest Age Range, 11—16.

Two important religious festivals—Christmas and Easter, are explained in this book. It attempts to help young people to understand the implications and prejudices behind these ceremonies by suggesting activities, e.g. "An Ash Wednesday Prayer-Meal" plus activities and things to make as follow up material. As a source book it could prove quite helpful but it is rather expensive and not well bound.

77-269 READ, B. *Building A House.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 32 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 690. Bliss UEN. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.1. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

An attractively illustrated book presenting the information in a clear and lighthearted way. However, the reading level ought to have been a little lower for this rather elementary content.

77-270 RYDER, D. *Viewpoints.* (3 titles). Blackie. 1976. 42 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, *A Start in Life* 13.0, *It's Your Future* 12.0, *A Time to Care* 14.0. Teacher Rating, 12—14. Interest Age Range, 14—16.

A set of three books providing 36 topics for discussion with secondary school pupils. Each Viewpoint deals with a specific realistic situation and develops such issues as understanding personal relationships, attitudes, political views, economics and morality in the broadest sense of the term. The books provide suggestions for four different types of follow-up work, discussion, negotiation, dramatization and project work. They are attractive and well produced and should be of great interest to teachers involved with general or social studies.

77-271 SIBLEY, C.B. *Energy & Power.* (How & Why Wonder Book). Transworld. £0.50p. 48 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 530, 621.48, 523. Bliss B. Readability—Formula Rating, 16.10. Teacher Rating, 15. Interest Age Range, 13—16.

A good selection of information with clear diagrams. The reading level seems unnecessarily high and the index lacks sufficient detail to make it a good reference book.

77-272 STROUD, J. *Encyclopedia of Useful Facts*. Pan. 1977. £0.60p. 218 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.2. Teacher Rating, 14. Interest Age Range, 12—16.

The content of such a book must inevitably be selective and it can never be possible to please everyone. However, it appears a very haphazard mixture and the balance of space peculiar, e.g. 16 British painters are mentioned but only 3 writers, 4 pages are given to inventions and discoveries but 8 to vehicle registration. Again, the Green Cross Code alongside the Church of England table of Kindred and Affinity seem to be aimed at totally different populations.

77-273 WOODWARD, I. *Clowns*. Ladybird Books. 1976. £0.24p. 51 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 791. Bliss YX3. Readability—Formula Rating, 13.6. Teacher Rating, 12+—13. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

This book sets out to describe some of the ancient art that lies behind the antics of contemporary clowns. It traces their history from Ancient Rome to modern times and also looks at their behaviour, costumes and make-up, as well as their progress in using the new media of film and television. It will be used mainly as a resource book but its high readability level and lack of detail gives it introductory use only.

See also Review Numbers 77—64, 65, 66, 67, 72, 74, 76, 86, 88

77-274 BUTTERWORTH, B. and STOCKDALE, B. *Jim Hunter Books.* (8 titles). Methuen. 1975/76. £0.35p. £0.45p. £0.55p. each. ReadabilityFormula Rating, 7.0—10.5. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range, 11—adult.

These eight titles are written around a secret agent and his well trained Alsatian. The story content is reasonable for the target population but outcomes are rather predictable. The readability levels seem rather varied for a series of readers of this type. They are more likely to be enjoyed by the secondary school slow reader than the adult even though their presentation appears to aim at an adult readership.

77-275 COX, A. *Fair Exchange* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.80p. 90 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.11. Teacher Rating, 7.0—8.0. Interest Age Range, 15—Adult.

An attempt to cover in story form a vast range of incidents which never really comes off. Situations include husband/wife relationships, moral judgments, evolution, blackmail and side show freaks—just too much at this level.

77-276 COX, A. *Danger at Hand.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.75p. 85 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.8. Teacher Rating, 7.0—8.0. Interest Age Range, 15—Adult.

A well told story at this reading level, capable of being read and understood by older poor readers. The story portrays the inter-relations within a family. The story itself is a little far fetched but the insights into relationships are well drawn.

77-277 CREASY, J. *Murder At Night.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.80p. 81 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.5—8.1. Teacher Rating, 7.0—8.0. Interest Age Range, 15—Adult.

A poorly written story of gore and violence which is unlikely to inspire the older slow reader or make him feel that the pursuit is worth the effort.

77-278 LEETE, A. *Second Chance for Love.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.80p. 122 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.5—8.6. Teacher Rating, 7—8. Interest Age Range, 14—Adult.

Written in the first instance for adults with literacy problems, the Aerial series of books could equally well appeal to the slow reader at the top end of the secondary school. This story will appeal to females. The first half is slow moving, contrived and not greatly interesting but after Sally begins her life again, the quality of writing and the realism of the situations greatly improve.

77-279 LEETE-HODGE, L. (retold). *Donovan.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.75p. 120 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.0. Teacher Rating, 7.0—8.0. Interest Age Range, 15—Adult.

The retelling of this story seems to emphasise the violence and blood-thirsty nature of the original. Surely it should be possible to get better quality material than this. It will no doubt be read by adults with poor reading ability but is unlikely to do much for their enjoyment of reading or their moral development.

77-280 LEETE-HODGE, L. *Dangerous Guest.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.80p. 119 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.5—8.0. Teacher Rating, 7—8. Interest Age Range, 15—Adult.

A rather cheap unconvincing thriller with very little characterisation, atmosphere or worthwhile plot. It seems to have been written to capitalise on the current television interest in sex, crime, violence and blood.

77-281 MORTIMER, D. *Dankworth's Yard.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.75p. 91 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 10.0. Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 15—Adult.

This title from the Aerial series preliminary level does not seem to fit from the point of view of reading level and is far more difficult than some of the others. Like the other titles however, the appeal is through crime, violence and slang. Little attempt has been made at characterisation and the plot is weak. Hardly material to inspire a poor reader that the effort is worthwhile.

77-282 MORTIMER, D. *Goodbye Angel, Goodbye Joanne.* Cedric Chivers. 1976. £0.75p. 88 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.6. Teacher Rating, 8—9. Interest Age Range, 15—adult.

Another book in Preliminary level of the Aerial series for people with a low level of literacy. It is a story of trouble and strife written around a young reporter and a group of Hell's Angels. The reading difficulty is higher than the others at this level but the story content is also more worthy of the effort that many adults with literacy problems may well have to put into it.

See also Review Numbers 77-177, 178, 180, 183, 203, 215, 244, 264.

Apparatus, Games and Kits

77-283 ARDIZZONE, E. *Little Tim & The Brave Sea Captain.* (Film & Booklet). Weston Woods (Oxford University Press). 1976. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

This film strip presents an interesting story of Tim and his old friend Captain McFee. Each frame is accompanied by part of the story and the whole tale takes 55 frames. The content of the story makes it suitable for a wide age range, but mainly junior children. The pictures are clear and the sequence carefully developed. There will be need for teacher discussion and preparation before such material is used by a pupil.

77-284 *Feely Letters.* E.S.A.

This material consists of felt letter outlines mounted on card. They are suitable to aid discrimination of important distinctive letter features and could have an extended use in aiding correct letter formation in early writing skills.

77-285 EVANS, E. *The Piccolo Puppet Book.* Pan. 1977. £0.50p. 94 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 791. Bliss VYI. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.0. Teacher Rating, 8.5. Interest Age Range, 7—10.

This book should be most useful to both teachers, parents and children who want to make many types of puppet ranging from the simple painted hand kind to the much more elaborate and intricate creations. Instructions are always difficult to follow and although an attempt has been made to present short sentences accompanied by many drawings, there still will be a need for adult guidance.

77-286 FROMAN, R. *Seeing Things.* Abelard. 1977. £1.75p. 64 pages. Readability—Teacher Rating, 9—10. Interest Age Range, 9—15.

An interesting and witty book, full of amusing pictures made with words. It

gives a new way of looking at everyday things which is creative and full of fun. This book will appeal to both young and old alike providing interesting activities in an entirely new way.

77-287 HOLT, M. *Fun With Numbers*. Pan. 1976. £0.40p. 104 puzzles. Library Classification, Dewey 793. Bliss VY. Readability—Formula Rating, 8.6. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

This is an intriguing book—full of number puzzles and games. It is a well laid out book with a puzzle to each page and should provide many enjoyable moments for competent upper junior children. Extremely good value for money.

77-288 ROOT, B. *I Spy*. Hart Davis. Interest Age Range, Pre-reading.

A game for two to four children aimed at improving letter recognition. A check is given by a picture on the reverse side.

77-289 ROOT, B. *Make-It*. Hart Davis. Interest Age Range, Pre-reading.

A set of letter cards for word building where an individual tries to make as many words as he can from a set number of letters.

77-290 ROOT, B. *Mix & Match Dominoes*. Hart-Davis. Interest Age Range, Pre-reading.

A set of rather unattractive dominoes where numbers of dots are matched which lead to the necessity to match pictures and words.

77-291 ROOT, B. *Time for Games*. Ginn. £12.95p.

This box of six games is a revised version of an earlier such set. The games are for the beginning reading stage and include activities for developing letter, word and sentence recognition. Any part of the kit can be used by from two to four players. Though enjoyable on occasions, the transfer of any learning

to books may be small. If such games were always self-corrective and did not depend so much upon competition between children, they would have more to offer.

77-292 WEBB, L.W. *Fifth Piccolo Picture Puzzle Book.* Pan. 1977. £0.40p. 90 pages. Library Classification, Dewey 793. Bliss V7. Readability—Formula Rating, 11.0. Teacher Rating, 10+. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

Within this book there are a good assortment of familiar puzzles, e.g. dot to dot, rearranging jumbled letters and mazes. The instructions are clear and the puzzles well laid out. There should be many hours of enjoyment for children who need to fill time on long journeys, wet days or for pure amusement.

77-293 WINGFIELD, E. & H. *Play Book Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4.* Ladybird. 1976. 21p. each. 31 pages. Readability—Formula Rating, 9.0—12.0. Teacher Rating, 10.0. Interest Age Range, 4—7.

This is an excellent series of books planned for a mother and child to use together. It encourages early reading and language development through creative and exploratory activities, e.g. "which go together", "I Spy". This structured guidance is helpfully outlined at the beginning of each book with a sensible emphasis on the qualities of understanding and patience.

77-294 KOZIAKIN, V. *Mazes for Fun, Nos. 3 and 4.* Pan. 1976. 35p. each. Library Classification, Dewey 793. Bliss VY. Readability—Formula Rating, (Instructions), 17.0. Teacher Rating, (Instructions), 14—15. Interest Age Range, 9—13.

On rainy days, winter evenings or as a fascinating interlude, these mazes are fun to complete. They come in the shapes of rockets, apples and toothpaste tubes etc. The time element imposed adds a degree of competition to this solo task as do the amusing and interesting shapes. The instructions have a high readability level but the mazes to a great extent are self explanatory.

77-295 *BFA Comprehension Skills Kits.* Holt-Saunders Ltd. 1976. £49.95 each. Formula, 6.3—13.6.

The complete range of eight kits cover the age range of 6 to 13 years, each individual kit having a range of somewhat over two years and therefore providing a useful overlap. The kits contain work cards, work books, answer books, lesson tapes and a teacher's manual and a colour coding system points to the particular groups of comprehension processes being practised.

Though the material is of American origin, children find it lively and interesting. Many children take some time to find their way around the material and the work books and consequently a good deal of teacher involvement is necessary in the early stages at the purely organisational level. However, once this stage has passed the teacher is freed for more constructive interaction with individual needs. Some children appear to need rather more material than is provided in order to progress naturally from one level to the next but overall children do develop a more insightful and wide ranging attack on material and comprehension levels on test improve rather more quickly than in the case on more traditional material.

The box is sturdy and the material well presented and durable so that although it may seem an expensive investment in the first instance, the amount of material and the length of its working life make the price appear reasonable.

77-296 *Distar Library Series.* S.R.A. 1977. £0.00. Readability—Formula Rating, 5.8—7.6. Interest Age Range, 6.0—10.0.

This pack of eight books forms a supplementary series to the Distar Reading Programme. Books 1—3 are suitable for children with limited reading skills who are reading independently for the first time and Books 4—8 require the mastery of certain words, no more than 3 per story, which have not appeared in the base programme. The books are fitted into the original programme and act as a reward for success within it.

The books contain lively stories of animals, children and familiar experiences, some are humorous and all appear equally attractive to boys and girls. The conversational style of writing and simplicity of the text are high motivating factors. Some American words, e.g. sidewalk, may need explanation.

The presentation is excellent, clear print, good division of text and lively illustrations all make for attractiveness and ease of use. The pack provides

five copies of each of the eight books and despite its expense is a worthwhile investment for those who use the Distar Programme to which it is closely tied.

The Teacher's Guide is a brief but helpful document and the books could be used over a wide age range in special schools.

77-297 HALL, A. and SMITH, D.A. (Eds). *Pilot Library 2A.* (Revised). S.R.A. 1977. Readability—Formula Rating, 7.3—12.0. Interest Age Range, 8.0—13.0.

This library in a box consists of 72 books, accompanying response cards, marking pencils, answer keys and a teacher's handbook. The books both fiction and non-fiction provide for an immense range of interests and are lively in both content and presentation.

The books are intended as a set of supplementary readers matched with the stages of reading in Reading Laboratory 2A and there are many subject links possible between the two sets of material. The readability levels of the stories do not, however, evince the same careful grading that is a feature of the reading laboratory. This means, of course, that with teacher supervision the child can select quite widely from the books and not be tightly restricted to his current level within the laboratory.

The material has a heavy American bias but forms an excellent set of readers regardless as to whether the companion laboratory is in use.

77-298 NORTH WEST ENGLISH GROUP. *Departures in English.* Blackie. 1977. £65.79p.

The claim for this pack is that it provides material for work in all ability classes for the 13—14 year age range. It seemed, however, that there was a good deal for the bright child, a reasonable amount for the average child but very little for the below average child.

The pack presents a very wide ranging set of resources covering grammar, essay writing, discussion, language development, drama, poetry, and English literature. There should be material for most tastes among both teachers and children and the variety of presentation of the various units of work including such items as quizzes and puzzles, film strip and tape, shows some imagination.

Teachers will need to familiarise themselves fully with the total pack for

the units of work are not graded and it is suggested that more than one class might draw on the material simultaneously.

When one considers the amount of material, the price seems reasonable but one would have liked to have seen the addition of more lively illustrations and a more durable material used for the many leaflets. A cassette tape would seem more valuable and usable than the spool provided.

CORRECTION

In Volume One, No. One, the price of the Knockout Books published by Longman was given incorrectly. They vary in price from 0.40p to 0.70p.

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